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*From a print*

## THE UNRIVALLED EXPRESS RIDER.

GINERY TWICHELL

*Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

### THE UNRIVALLED EXPRESS RIDER

Ginery Twichell carrying dispatches from Worcester to Hartford, a distance of sixty-six miles, in three hours and twenty minutes.



# HISTORIC EVENTS of Worcester

*A Brief Account*

Of Some of the Most Interesting Events Which  
Have Occurred in Worcester During the  
Past Two Hundred Years



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Issued by the

**Worcester Bank & Trust Company**

In Commemoration of the Two Hundredth  
Anniversary of the Incorporation of the  
Town of Worcester

1922

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Walton Advertising & Printing Company  
Boston, Mass.*

176939

# Introduction

**I**NASMUCH as the city will celebrate in 1922 the two hundredth anniversary of its incorporation as a town, it has been thought appropriate that the third of the annual historic brochures issued by the Worcester Bank & Trust Company should review some of the happenings which have stirred the people of Worcester with enthusiasm or held them tense with joy or alarm. No attempt has been made to include all events, or to arrange them in the order of their historical importance, but to select those which will best reflect the spirit of the men who have made the city such a source of pride to its inhabitants. How far we have succeeded, a perusal of these pages will determine.

Two hundred years ago the town crier went through Main Street knocking on each door and calling the men to the first town meeting. Today the people of Worcester, whose homes and diverse industries compose the second largest city in Massachusetts, are proudly aware of the part they take in the affairs of the world. To recall some of the excitements and vivid moments its citizens have experienced, is to realize how ardent Worcester's growth has been, and upon what firm foundations it is built.

The first white resident of Worcester was Ephraim Curtis. He bought the two hundred and fifty acres of land with which the General Court of Massachusetts had, in 1664, rewarded the services of Ensign Thomas Noyes of Sudbury. None of the Noyes family, for whose use the gift was given, ever attempted to occupy it, but "the young man called Ephraim Curtis of Sudbury" had the courage to build the only home between Marlborough and Brookfield on the old Connecticut road and there, without human companionship, to start farming sometime before 1674.

Quinsigamond, as Worcester was first called from the lake which it borders, had long been looked upon as a desirable place for a "new plantation." It lay midway between Boston and Springfield and early surveys had shown that it was naturally adaptable for a settlement. Since the grants made to individuals in 1656, 1662 and 1664 had produced no substantial effect, the General Court appointed a Committee "to make a true report whether the place be capable of a village, and what number of families can be there accomodated." This report was made in 1668, but five years elapsed before men began cutting down trees to make houses, and cultivation was under way. The claim of Ephraim Curtis, whom the Committee found living on the place they had designated as the very center of the town, was adjusted by allowing him to keep the fifty acres "without the bounds" of the eight square miles they had marked out. Later, Curtis was one of the best defenders the town had. Then the Indians gave over their right to the "very good chestnut tree land" for twelve pounds in lawful New England money.

## INTRODUCTION

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The Indians, who lived at Pakachoag and on the eastern shore of Lake Quinsigamond, were mild and peaceable, having been preached to by John Eliot the evangelist, and some of them could read and write. But they were not the only ones to be reckoned with. King Philip forced even these Praying Indians into warfare against their white neighbors, and the little settlement did not remain standing a year. The very Sagamores who had signed the deed of purchase burned the houses after their builders had fled to join forces with those of a stronger garrison.

The General Court's Committee, however, was composed of men whose earnestness in making a success of their undertaking was equaled only by their wisdom in planning. Daniel Gookin, Daniel Henchman, Thomas Prentice, Richard Beers, who was killed in King Philip's War, and John Wing were the ones most responsible for Worcester in its early days.

In 1684 a few of the first settlers and some of the others were induced to return, and a petition to change the name from Quinsigamond to Worcester was made and granted. Descendants of Daniel Gookin point out that it was he who suggested the change in honor of Oliver Cromwell. Worcester, which means "war-castle," is the city in England where Cromwell shattered the forces of Charles II in 1651. "Gookin was in England in 1650, and, from his familiarity with distressing conditions there, he could well understand why the defeat of the King's forces in the succeeding year would be regarded as a 'crowning mercy.'" Gookin's family had had the friendship of Cromwell, and he himself had been made a Promoter of the Colony in Jamaica which Cromwell had wished to found. Popularly the battle of Worcester was remembered by the words of Hugh Peters in his speech to the militiamen who fought in it: "When your wives and children shall ask you where you have been and what news, say you were at Worcester where England's sorrows began, and where they are happily ended." It may have been, too, that some other member of the Committee or one of the settlers had personal recollections of the English Worcester. However, the exact reason for bestowing this name is not known.

Again the Indians proved too terrifying; for the bloody happenings all about Worcester, in Queen Anne's War, caused the abandonment of the mills, the fort, and the rude log houses which had sprung up "after the manner of a town." Digory Sergent stayed on after every one had gone, and paid for his risk with his life. His wife, also, was killed by the Indians and his children led away. Two of them chose to remain with their captors all their lives.

In 1713, a permanent settlement was at last begun. "A proper Committee to direct in ordering the prudentials of the plantation till they came to a full settlement" was made up of Hon. William Dudley, Lieutenant Colonel John Ballantine, Colonel Adam Winthrop and Captain Thomas Howe. By 1718, Jonas Rice, who might well have told with pride of the brave efforts he and his family made during the first two years, when they were the only inhabitants, had about him

## INTRODUCTION

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fifty-eight farms and as many as two hundred fellow pioneers. The first town meeting was held September 28, 1722, and Worcester entered upon a period of steady advance toward character and good fellowship as well as size.

That wild animals and destructive birds made great trouble for the young community is shown by such notices as this in the town records:

Voted that forty Shillings money be allowed & paid to Such of y<sup>e</sup> Inhabitants of y<sup>e</sup> Town for every woolf by them killed in y<sup>e</sup> Bounds of y<sup>e</sup> Town, and that may be Discovered in & be followed out of y<sup>e</sup> Town and killed and Sixpence for Each Rattle Snake killed at their Dens or near y<sup>e</sup> Same & y<sup>e</sup> tails produced to y<sup>e</sup> Selectmen and burnt.

Until 1753, there is hardly a record of a town meeting which does not include:

Voted that Several Sums following be granted to be paid to y<sup>e</sup> persons to whome y<sup>e</sup> Same is due—in Lawfull money.

Vizt: To Tyrus Rice for 7 birds heads & one tail	o o 51-4
To Samuel Andrew for 9 birds & one tail	o o 93-4
To Palmer Golding for 3 birds & 2 tails	o o 83-4
To John Chandler Esq. for 354 birds	1 2 2

It may be imagined that the stories of dangerous exploits these mute evidences called forth enlivened the grave lawmakings.

The attention of the country was turned to Worcester early in Revolutionary times, by the coming of Isaiah Thomas with his printing press, in order that he might continue to publish the *Massachusetts Spy* in sympathetic surroundings. The town had already taken a very positive stand against the Tory freeholders, and Colonel Timothy Bigelow was drilling a company of patriots on the Common. Throughout the Revolution, Worcester took its part in the struggle and great was the rejoicing when the Declaration of Independence was first read in New England on the porch of the Old South Church.

The Butman Riot, the formation of the Free Soil Party and the Emigration to Kansas were the most thrilling expressions the citizens of Worcester gave to their intense feeling about slavery. When the Civil War came, the Worcester Light Infantry troops were part of the Massachusetts Regiment which had to fight its way through Baltimore on the journey to Washington after the firing on Fort Sumter. From a population of 30,000 there were 3,927 enrollments.

In retrospect, the record of Worcester is an unusually gratifying one to contemplate. In the town hall, in the streets and homes, events took place which helped to clarify the right side of momentous national questions. Famous men have been numbered among its inhabitants. Many contributions to progress have been invented within its bounds. But no one can read the chronicles of Worcester's development without being impressed by the vigor and versatility which have always been outstanding qualities of the city.

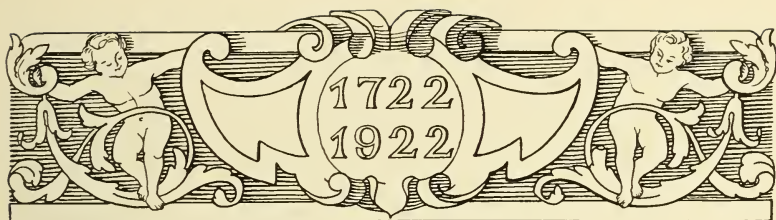




*From a print*

WORCESTER IN 1858. A VIEW FROM UNION HILL

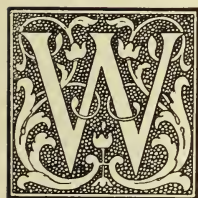
*Courtesy of the Worcester Public Library*



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

## PURCHASE OF LAND FROM THE INDIANS

*July 13, 1674*



WHEN it is recalled that twenty-four dollars' worth of trinkets bought the 14,000 acres in the Island of Manhattan from their aboriginal possessors, it would seem that twelve pounds "in lawful New England money" was a fair price to pay for a plantation "eight miles square." But Daniel Gookin, who may well be honored as the father of Worcester, had as much diplomacy as determination. Moreover, he regarded the Indians as his fellowmen, and understood them with a sympathy that was far in advance of the people of his day. He was "betrusted and employed for the Civil government and conduct of all the Indians in the Massachusetts Colony by order of the General Court," and the Nipmuck village near the proposed settlement on Lake Quinsigamond contained the wigwams of over a hundred of the "Praying Indians." He and John Eliot, the Apostle to the Indians, had visited them the year before.

On July 13, 1674, Daniel Gookin came to Pakachoag Hill, where Holy Cross College now stands, bringing with him a carefully-drawn-up deed and some cloth and two coats as evidences of good faith. Solomon, alias Woonaskochu, Sagamore of Tataessit, and John, alias Hoorrawanonit, the Sagamore of Pakachoag, met him there, and signed the document.

A copy of the original deed is in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds at Cambridge, Massachusetts. Because of its age, and its quaint phrasing, it is quoted below in full:

Bee it known to all men by this present writing, that Wee, John, alias Horrawannonit, or Quiquonassett, Sagamore of Pakachoge, and Solomon, alias Woonaskochu, Sagamore of Tataessit, together with the consent of our kindred and people, and for and in consideration of twelve pounds of lawful money of New England, or the full value

13 July 1974. 8

noah wiswell glen

By this document, the Nipmuck Indians sold their right to Quinsigamond plantation to the General Court's Committee. It is dated July 13, 1674, and was subsequently recorded in the Middlesex County Registry of Deeds at Cambridge, Massachusetts.



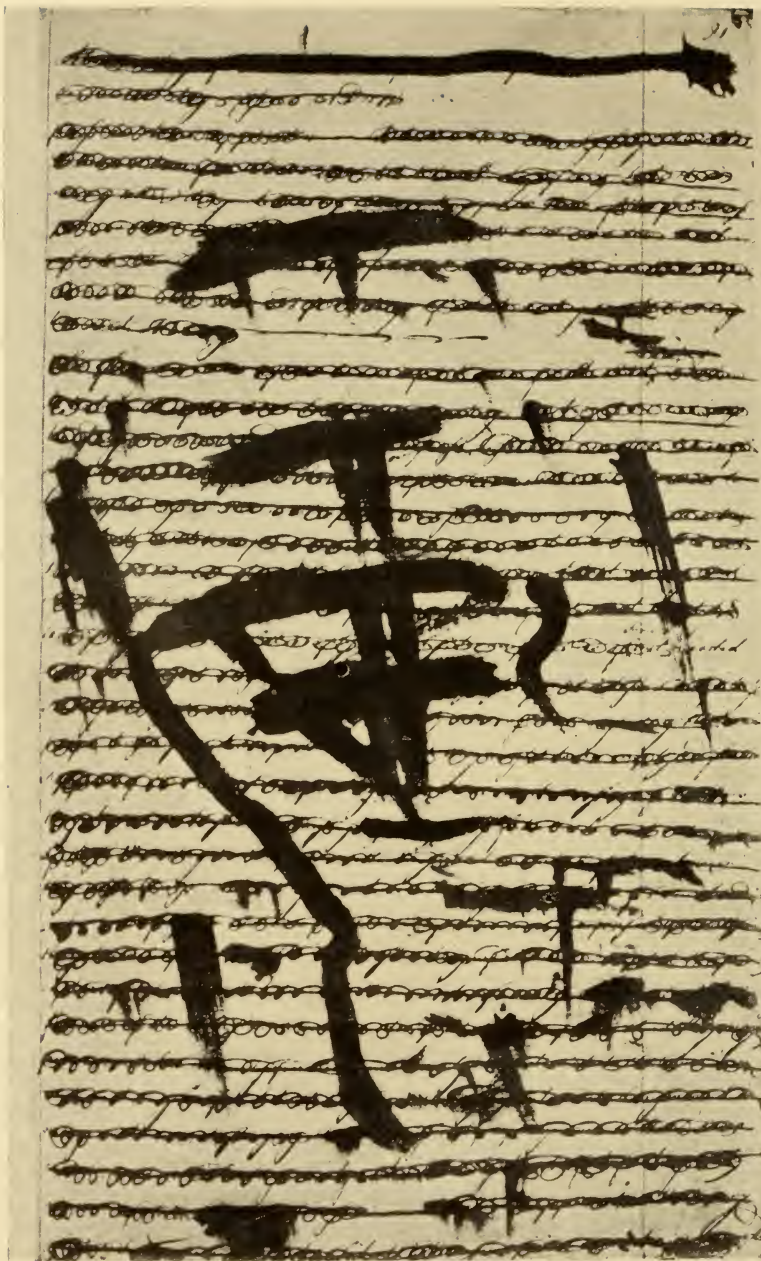
HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

thereof, in other specie, to our content, within three months after the date hereof, well and truly to be paid, and satisfied, and pt. whereof, viz. two coats and four yards of trading cloth, valewed at twenty six shill. wee do acknowledge to have received in hand, as earnest, of Daniel Gookin senr. of Cambr. Esqr. and of Daniel Hinchman, of Boston, Brewer, in behalf of themselves and Capt. Thomas Prentice, and Lt. Richard Beers, and the rest of the Genll. Court's Comittee, appointed for the management of a new plantation granted by the said Court, conteyning eight miles square, of the contents thereof, being to the westward of Marlborough, near Quansiquamond Ponds, and on each side of the Roadway leading towards Connecticut; Now know ye, yt wee, ye sd. Jno. and Solomon, Sagamores aforesaid, and upon the terms aforesaid, have bargained, sold, aliened, enfeeoffed, and confirmed, unto ye sd. Daniel Gookin, Thomas Prentice, Daniel Hinchman, Richard Beers, and ye rest of the people admitted, or to be admitted, by ye sd comittee to be inhabitants of yt new plantation, and to their heirs, executors, admrs, and assigns for ever, in fee simple, all and every pt of our civil or natural right, in all and singular the broken up land and woodlands, woods, trees, rivers, brooks, ponds, swamps, meadows, mineralls, or any other thing, or things whatsoever, lying and being within that tract of land, conteyning eight miles square or the contents thereof, to be layd out by ye sd persons or their order in time convenient. To have and to hold the premises, and every pt thereof, unto them the sd Daniel Gookin, Thomas Prentice, Daniel Hinchman, and Richard Beers, and all ye rest of ye sd Inhabitants admitted or to be admitted planters there, and unto ym and yr heirs forever, freely and absolutely, without any lett, molestation, or disturbance, of us, or any of our kindred or people, or any claiming by, from, or under us, for evermore, as our heysr or assigns; and wee do promise, upon the finishing ye payment, to make full and ample deeds and writings for the same, according to law. In witness of the truth hereof, wee ye said John and Solomon, alias Horrowanonitt and Wooannaskochu, have hereunto set our hands and seals, this thirteenth day of July 1674.

Signed, Sealed and delivered in the presence of us,	} Solomon, alias Woonnasakochu, seal and mark. John, alias Hoorrawanwit, mark and seal.
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Onnamog, his mark, Sagamore of Oconomesett.  
Namphow, his mark, Sagamore of Wamesett.  
Joseph Thatcher, of Chabanakonchoie, his mark.  
Nosannowitt, his mark. NOAH WISWALL, present.

Full payment rec'd August 20, 1676. D. GOOKIN.  
This deed acknowledged by the Sagamores, before Daniel Gookin,  
Sen. Assist. July 13.  
Entered, 9. 2. 83 by Thomas Danforth, R.



*From a photograph of the original in the Town Records*

#### THE TORY PROTEST

The page from the Town Records which Clark Chandler, the Town Clerk, not only scratched with his pen, but smudged with his fingers to blot out words he had written without authority.

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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## THE TORY PROTEST BLOTTED OUT OF THE TOWN RECORDS

*August 24, 1774*

Two years before the Fourth of July became a national holiday, the Boston papers were full of resolutions passed in all the colonial assemblies expressing resentment against the Boston Port Bill. The towns of Massachusetts were publishing their grievances against Governor Hutchinson and General Gage, who were representatives of a government which was becoming more and more unbearable. What must have been the amazement of the Whigs in Worcester County to see in a conspicuous place in the *Boston News Letter* of June 30, 1774, a copy of a bitter announcement of Tory sentiments, which they had heard read at a special town meeting ten days before, and which they had decisively voted down.

It was headed thus:

*Messrs. Printers:* If you please, you may give the following Protestation etc. of us, a few friends of truth, peace, and order, a place in your paper;

For it is believed that we and many others thro' the province have too long already held our peace.

In it, the fifty-two signers, who comprised about one-fourth of the town's voters, and some of whom were well-known men, declared:

"It is with the deepest concern for public peace and order that we behold so many whom we used to esteem sober, peaceable men so far deceived, deluded and led astray by the artful, crafty and insidious practices of some evil minded and ill disposed persons, who under the disguise of patriotism, and falsely styling themselves the friends of liberty, some of them neglecting their own proper business and occupation in which they ought to be employed for the support of their families, spending their time discoursing of matters they do not understand, raising and propagating falsehoods and calumnies of those men they look up to with envy, and on whose fall and ruin they wish to rise, intend to reduce all things to a state of tumult, discord and confusion." It further accused these "ill disposed persons" of "bringing into real danger, and in many instances destroying, that liberty and property we all hold sacred, and which they vainly and impiously boast of defending at the expense of their blood and treasure."

"The Committees of Correspondence," it was their firm opinion, "being creatures of modern invention, constituted as they be, are a legal grievance having no legal foundation, contrived by a junto to serve particular designs and purposes of their own, and that they, as they have been and are now managed in the town, are a nuisance." And they feared, "it is in a great measure, owing to the baneful influence of such committees that the teas of immense value, lately belonging to the East India Company, were not long since scandalously destroyed in Boston."



## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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In short the whole document is an interesting illustration of the fact that the Revolutionary War was not a unanimous uprising of all the colonists against King George, but a popular movement which caused a series of misunderstandings and bitter quarrels between old neighbors and sometimes kinsmen all over the colonies.

This protest had been written because at the regular town meeting held on May 20th, Joshua Bigelow had been elected as the representative to the General Court, and the customary instructions to him then read voiced much that was revolutionary.

The instructions were the production of the American Political Society, a powerful organization of the leaders of Whig plans and activities in Worcester and were therefore much too radical to be received with unanimous approval. No Tory could vote that he wished to see a General Congress of the Committees of Correspondence formed, "so that we may unite in some safe and sane plan to secure and defend the American liberties." Nor did the loyal subjects of the King wish to direct their representative "to endeavor that" Judge Peter Oliver be impeached, because he was willing to receive a bounty for his services out of the taxes the Crown levied, instead of letting the colonial legislature grant him his salary and his freedom from possible corruption as well.

An angry discussion burst forth. Colonel James Putnam, one of the most influential of Worcester's freeholders, had pleaded eloquently against putting the town on record as rebellious and anxious for a war with England. But the Whig vote was strong enough to win.

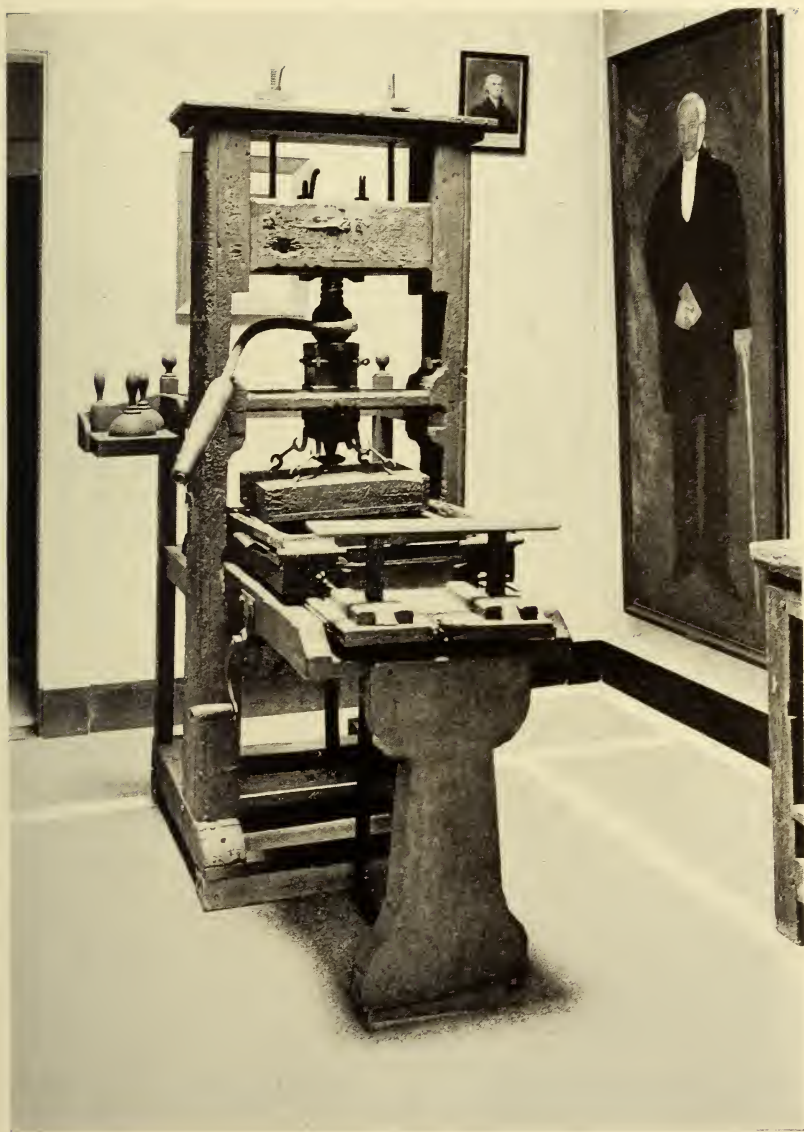
The Tories petitioned the selectmen for a special meeting to discuss further this critical decision, and on the 20th of June, after they had been again defeated, their vigorous protest was brought forward. This was also refused, and the Whigs went home, still surprised at the boldness of its language, but believing its effect had been short-lived.

And now here it was in a Boston paper, for all the colonists to take as a sign of how Worcester felt, when every reflecting person knew that a political crisis was near at hand.

Indignation grew as men confronted each other with the news. The insult to the inhabitants of the town! The aspersions against men as respected as William Young, Timothy Bigelow and John Smith (the local Committees of Correspondence)! The perfidy of the Town Clerk in entering the protest on the town records! A group of people excitedly composed a petition to the selectmen for an assembly to take immediate action. Before the day was over, the men who had subscribed the protest had met many a sneer and a threat, and some of them had signed recantations which intermittently appeared in the newspapers until the following December.

As for Clark Chandler, the Town Clerk, whose sympathies had swayed his sense of duty,—he made public atonement. On August 24th, when the meeting was called, after what seems now a very long delay for so important a matter—he came, "a rather undersized man, who always wore bright red smallclothes," and was thus admonished:

"Mr. Clark Chandler: Whereas the town, at their annual meeting



*From the original in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society*

The old Blaew Press which Isaiah Thomas moved from Boston to Worcester just before the Battle of Lexington. The picture at the right is that of Robert B. Thomas, the originator of the famous "Old Farmer's Almanac."

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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in March last, as well as for several years before, honored you by choosing you for their Clerk, relying on you for fidelity that you would act for the honor of the town, and find themselves much disappointed in your conduct in recording on the town book the scandalous protest of William Elder and others, filled with falsehood and reflection against the town, we have just reason to fear you was actuated in the matter by unjustifiable motives, and at this time exhort you to be more circumspect in the execution of the duties of your office, and never give this town the like trouble of calling a town meeting again on such an occasion. The town wish to see your behavior such as may restore you to their former good opinion of you."

He was then "required to obliterate, erase or otherwise deface the said recorded protest and the names thereto subscribed so that it may become utterly illegible and unintelligible."

He opened the record book, and rapidly drew precise little spiral scrawls across the pages. The scratching of his pen fell upon a silence heavy with the censure of his fellow townspeople. Perhaps the scrutinizing eyes of the Committee could see a word showing here and there after he had finished. Perhaps the murmurings of the assembly rose to demand further humiliation. At any rate, the smudges made by drawing his inky finger across the writing are still in the town record book today.

### "THE FIRST THING PRINTED IN WORCESTER"

*The Massachusetts Spy issued by Isaiah Thomas*

*May 3, 1775*

With the roar of the cannon at Lexington still ringing in his ears, a slender young man of twenty-six spurred his horse toward Worcester on April 20, 1775. Dismounting at Colonel Bigelow's house, opposite the Court House, he went down into the basement, and there with deft fingers made ready a weapon more powerful than his rifle, and much easier for him to handle.

Isaiah Thomas had been a printer ever since he was seven years old. Zechariah Fowle of Boston had sat him upon a high bench so he could reach the case, and let him set the type for ballads and pamphlets. There is a story that the apprentice was so young and the master so ignorant that neither knew the rules of punctuation. Therefore when it was noticed that a patriotic poem they were printing had been written in such ardent haste that not a single comma, colon or even a period had been inserted, a book of ballads was taken down from the shelf, a page turned to at random, and the punctuation of the ballad there faithfully copied on the work in hand!

But the boy grew to love his work, and eleven years later in Halifax, where he had gone with the hope of obtaining passage for London, he not only printed but edited the Halifax *Gazette*, owned by Anthony Henry, until the objections of the Loyalists to the Boston journeyman's


1818.
**Massachusetts Spy**  
 Or, American ORACLE of Liberty.

NUMR. 219.

Capt. J. C. *Wheeler, Fairbairn*; Mr. Hon-  
 or. Gen. *W. H. Taylor*; "Capt. Samuel Baker,  
*Esq.*; "Col. Jonathan Gross, *President*; Capt.  
 John Day, *Secretary*; Col. Phil. Mendall,  
*Adjutant*; Squire Dwyer, *Esq.*; John H. Case,  
 Timothy A. and Frederick, *Mr. Ward*; Nathan  
 Woods, *Mr. M. A. Chandler*; Upton, *Mr. James*  
 Woods, *Nr.*; Samuel J. Johnson, *Druid*; Mr. John  
 Sherman, *Griffin*; M. Nathan Green, *Railroad*;  
 Mr. Nathan Wood, *Wilmington*; Mr. Jonathan  
 Baldwin, *Temple*; Mr. William Bagelow, *A-*  
 lford; Mr. Samuel A. Westbrook, *Peruville*; J. H.  
 Wofford, *Esq.*; and by many other Gentlemen  
 in several parts of the province.

[illegible]

THE NEW MASSACHUSETTS SPY.  
PUBLISHED WEEKLY.  
To the INDEPENDENT of the MASSACHUSETTS-  
BAY.  
(Continued from page 1-3.)

[illegible]

The last recited clause from this charter, we have  
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"It is upon this fact, as a familiar one in the character of William and Mary, that our poets have built up the flagrant fiction of American independence." He is so. "The few dozen verifiers no other would sustain the holding. It is im, omic to undermine it as much as a man."

"I have already, says our writer, shown that the supposition of our being extirpated from the authorities of Parmenides, is pregnant with the profit absurdities."—No mortal excepting him, has ever been able to see those absurdities. We have from what fact every pretensions amounted to in a paid paper, and to whom the absurdities were imputable." Let us now, says he, consider this clause in connection with

[illegible]

1. The MASSACHUSETTS, or AMERICAN ORACLE of LIBERTY, shall be printed on good paper, manufactured in this province, with a neat type.

II. It shall contain four pages, large folio, of the same size of the Boston newspaper.

III. To be published every WEDNESDAY Morning, as early as possible, and delivered to the Subscribers on Worcester, at their homes, and sent by the first opportunity to such as live at a greater distance.

IV. Every Subscriber to pay Three Shillings and Four Pence, Lawful Money, at the time of subscribing, and Three Shillings and Four Pence more at the expiration of Twelve Months. The price being Six Shillings and Eight Pence per Annum.

VI. Advertisement to be inserted in a neat and conspicuous manner in the lowest rate.

SUB-CRIMINALS are taken by Capt. Publisher in *Worcester*, and by the following Gentlemen, viz. Capt. A. A. Weston, and Mr. William Dunsmuir, *Lawrence*; Dr. W. L. Johnson, *Andover*; John Chas. Foster, *Wm. Brewster*; J. M. Leonard, *Orford*; Capt. Jonathan H. Allen, *Charlotte*; Capt. Henry Kutz, and Mr. Amos, *Worcester*; Supt. Col. John H. Chase, and Mr. J. Allen, *Leicester*; Mr. Josiah How, *Rutland*; Mr. John Mason, *Hingham*; Com. Isaac W. Thompson, *Mass.*; Mr. Levi Brigham, *Norborough*; Capt. Stephen Maynard, *W. Worcester*; and Artemas May and Sherburne, *D. John*; J. Ayler, *Lawrence*.

This News paper is the first thing  
printed in Worcester. *Wm. B. T.*

*From the original in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society*

At the bottom of the page Isaiah Thomas himself wrote, "This newspaper is the first thing ever printed in Worcester."



## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

very ardent disapproval of the Stamp Act obliged him to leave. In 1770, after some financially profitless adventures in the South, he was again in Boston, where in his own paper, the *Massachusetts Spy*, he was unrestrained in his attacks upon British tyranny.

The Whigs of Worcester County, realizing the necessity for a paper to represent them against the influential Loyalists who lived in the shire town, had consulted Thomas about sending down one of his printers. Plans had been made in February, 1775, for the Worcester *Gazette*, or the "American Oracle of Liberty." But "war commencing sooner than was expected," Boston became a dangerous place for a defiant Son of Liberty and his "sedition factory" where lights often burned until after midnight in order that extra hand bills and pamphlets might reinforce the patriotic sentiments of his paper's columns. So it was Isaiah Thomas himself who came to Worcester. Colonel Timothy Bigelow and General Joseph Warren helped him to transport the type and the only one of his printing presses which the British did not either carry away or destroy.

Samuel Adams and John Hancock were at Worcester on the 24th of April, and maybe before, on their way to the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, and it was at their request that the Committee of Safety in the Province voted that "four reams of paper be immediately ordered to Worcester for the use of Mr. Thomas, printer; he to be accountable." On May 3d the *Spy* made its reappearance after a suspension of three weeks. Posts and messengers distributed the copies.

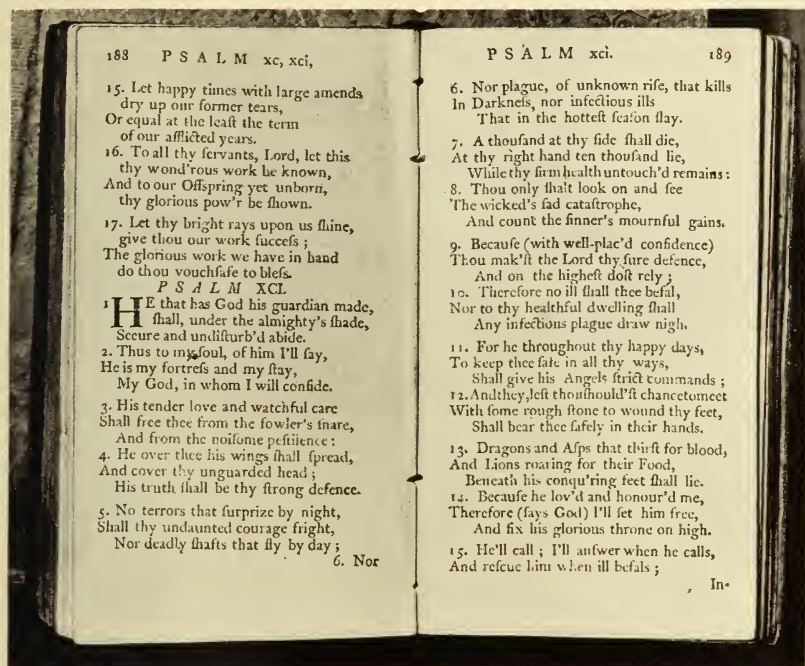
It was the first thing printed in Worcester or in any inland town in New England, but this fact may well have been outweighed in the minds of the two hundred regular Worcester subscribers and the many other eager readers it found there, by the significance of the bold motto: "Americans! Liberty or Death! Join or Die!" and the grimness of the editor's salutation:

I beg the assistance of all the friends of our righteous cause to circulate this paper. They may rely that the utmost of my poor endeavors shall be used to maintain those rights and privileges for which we and our fathers have bled!

The vivid account of the happenings on April 19th, beginning "Americans! forever bear in mind the *Battle of Lexington!*" must have been the most discussed news the four pages carried. Other contents were a report of a debate in the House of Commons on February 27th concerning the Fishery Bill "to restrain the provinces from carrying on any fishery on the banks of New Foundland," and a resolution of the Provincial Congress at Concord to set aside a day for public humiliation, fasting and prayer, "that the people of Great Britain and their rulers may have their eyes opened to discern things that shall make for the peace of the nation and all its connections—and that America may soon behold a gracious interposition of Heaven for the redress of her grievances." There were also brief items from Boston, Philadelphia, New London and New York, and copies of letters received from England telling of the attitude there toward the American Revolution.



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER



*From the original in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society*

## PSALM BOOK

This almost unrecognizable version in rhyme of the ninety-first psalm is contained in Tate and Brady's Collection of Psalms, which was the one in use in the Old South Church until 1790. On the fly-leaf of this copy, now in the possession of the American Antiquarian Society, is written "Stephen Salisbury, 1778."

The little yellow printing office near the Court House, into which the press was subsequently moved, soon made Worcester a tower of strength in defense of American freedom. The *Spy* and its fearless "trumpetings" were already known to both Whigs and Loyalists all over the country. Through it, Worcester came closely in touch with other centers of the war and in turn her fearless men, such as Artemas Ward, Edward Bangs and Dwight Foster, could voice their feelings in its columns. For several months, Isaiah Thomas also did all the printing for the Provincial Congress, and that led to the establishment of a system of post riders, who made the connection between Worcester, Watertown and Cambridge even closer.

Samuel F. Haven, at one time librarian of the American Antiquarian Society, said once that "a newspaper is the autobiography of the community in which it is published." The files of the *Massachusetts Spy* furnish, in a spirited style, the story of Worcester's development through the Revolution until 1860. In 1787, Isaiah Thomas suspended

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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its publication, because a tax on newspaper advertisements seemed to him too like the British Stamp Act to be tolerated. The *Worcester Weekly Magazine* then took its place for two years.

Students of journalism today may smile at the small amount of space sometimes given to local news and personals in proportion to that devoted to long "essays and hearsays" reprinted from other publications. It should be considered, however, that in the early days of the country, people had to depend on the newspapers much more than now for instruction in manners, for amusement, and for an appreciation of how big the world was.

As closely connected with Worcester as with the *Massachusetts Spy* is the name of Isaiah Thomas. With the exception of three years, during the war, when poverty forced him to lease his press, he spent all his long life there busying himself with a remarkable variety of interests. He was postmaster for many years, and his printing business, under the more prosperous conditions which peace brought, grew until he became not only a publisher and a bookseller, but a binder and the owner of a paper mill, as well. He was known on both sides of the Atlantic for his skillful productions, and Benjamin Franklin, who on a visit to Worcester in 1776 took time to repair the old Blaew press, called him "The Baskerville of America."

Even after he had given his printing business to his son in 1802, he wrote in his diary that he had agreed to become a partner in a tannery; that he hired two surveyors and went with them to survey the land for a turnpike road to Boston; "my week at the bank"; and comments on the building of bridges, streets, and other public matters about which his advice was sought. The two achievements for which the world knows him are "A History of Printing in America" in two volumes and his founding of the American Antiquarian Society, one of the greatest repositories of rare historical documents, old books and rare newspapers in America.

### VISIT OF WASHINGTON

*July 1, 1775*

From the *Massachusetts Spy*:

WORCESTER, July 5th.—On Saturday last passed through this town from Philadelphia on their way to the American Army, the Generals Washington and Lee, the former of whom is appointed by the Grand Continental Congress, Generalissimo of the united forces of America. They were met on their way by Dr. Church and Mr. Moses Gill, who was a Committee chose for that purpose by the Honorable Provincial Congress; they were escorted by a troop of horse from Brookfield under the Command of Capt. Joseph Chadwick and a number of gentlemen of this town.

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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*From a print*

*Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

## VIEW OF WORCESTER IN 1838 SHOWING THE BLACKSTONE CANAL AND THE BOSTON AND WORCESTER RAILROAD

A railroad train appears at the extreme right. The canal in the foreground was used mainly for freight transportation.

## FIRST READING OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE IN NEW ENGLAND

*July 14, 1776*

The people of Worcester gathered hastily around the Old South Church on the morning of July 14, 1776. A few days before, the *Spy* had announced: "It is reported that the Honorable Continental Congress have declared the American Colonies independent of the monster of imperious domination and cruelty—Great Britain! Which we hope is true."

Now word went around that a copy of the declaration had been obtained from a Congressional messenger riding through the town, and shops and houses were left empty as every one hurried to hear about it.

Isaiah Thomas, with the precious copy of the *Philadelphia Gazette* in his hand, mounted to the portico over the western entrance to the church, and silence came as he unfolded it and read: "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another"—

Worcester was the first place in New England to listen to the inspiring words. They were read again the next day after the usual Sunday services, and Monday was given over to a celebration of them.

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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Bells rang, drums rolled, bonfires blazed and cannons roared, while the inhabitants gave free expression to their joy. The coat of arms of George III, "which in former times decorated, but of late disgraced the Court House," was taken down and burned, and the leading tavern in the town was deprived of its sign, because it bore the same despised insignia. The landlord did not object, but assisted in his crowded hospice, while rounds of patriotic toasts were drunk.

Benjamin Russell, who became the editor of the *Boston Centinel*, was at that time an apprentice in the office of the *Spy*. In later years he recalled the excitement of the day.

"We were all so happy," he said, "we did not know exactly what we did, but we gave full vent to our patriotic feelings till a late hour in the evening. We were a little surprised in the morning to find that about a dozen of us had enlisted as private soldiers in the army, a recruiting officer being then in town."

As he was under sixteen years of age, his enlistment was not valid. The *Spy* concludes its story of the festivities by saying:

The greatest decency and good order was observed, and at a suitable time each man returned to his respective home.

### INNOVATION IN THE MANNER OF CONGREGATIONAL SINGING AT THE OLD SOUTH MEETING-HOUSE

*August 8, 1779*

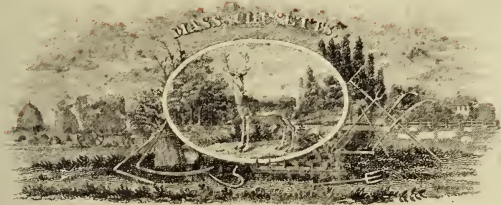
The Reverend Thaddeus Maccarty rose in the Old South Meeting-house one Sunday in August, 1779, and in "his distinct and sonorous" voice read from Tate and Brady's Collection the psalm the congregation was to sing. Deacon Chamberlain, the oldest of the church elders, from his place, slowly said the first line again. Then the people started singing. No musical instrument of any kind led them, but on this particular Sunday morning the tune seemed surer and louder than usual. There was no pause when the end of the first line was reached. The hymn went on without the customary wait for the deacon to read the next words. Greatly distressed, the venerable man attempted to make himself heard. But the congregation kept on singing. A controversy which had lasted for forty years had been brought to an issue and the result was to be decided then and there.

The custom of having the deacon pronounce every line had had its beginning at a time when many devout worshipers were not able to read the words. First a line was read, then it was sung, each singer supplying his own melody, since the notes would not have been intelligible either, even though there had been a book for every one.

The town had appreciated the unhappy effect of such haphazard harmony in 1726, and had brought up the matter at town meeting, which was also held in the Old South Meeting-house. But the tradition was firmly established, and, because it was a religious one, hard to displace. The next step was diplomatic. Leaders of singing were ap-



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER



## WORCESTER AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY,

On the *eleventh* day of *March* A.D. 18*78*

—Admitted—

*Capt. Ephraim Moore*  
*of Worcester,*

INTO THE SAID SOCIETY,

And Granted Him

THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF A MEMBER.

In Testimony of which their Seal is affixed.

*Levi Smith,*

President.

*Edw. D. Bangs, Secy.* Secretary.

From the original

Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill

### MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE OF THE WORCESTER AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

This certificate is a souvenir of the society's first meeting.

pointed and were asked to sit together "in the two hind body seats, on the men's side, on the lower floor of the meeting-house." This helped the unity somewhat, but the psalms were still too broken up to be musical.

On August 5, 1779, the town, influenced by the fact that other towns were adopting the newer and better way of divine praise, voted, "That

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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the singers sit in the front seats in the front gallery, and those gentlemen who have heretofore sat in the front seats in said gallery have a right to sit in the front and second seat below and that said singers have said seats appropriated to said use." Also, "That said singers be requested to take said seats and carry on singing in public worship." And, "That the mode of singing in the Congregation here be without reading the psalms, line by line, to be sung."

So it was, on the Sunday following, that Deacon Chamberlain's protests were in vain. The story is that he seized his hat, and in tears left the meeting.

### SHAYS'S REBELLION

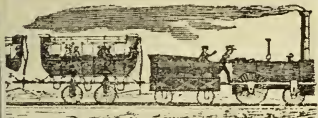
1786-87

Only two or three Worcester men joined the army of insurgents whose purpose and method of uprising are alike unique in the country's history, but no complete account of Shays's Rebellion can ever be written without the stirring chapters of it which had the Worcester Court House for their setting. From September, 1786, until the January following, the people of Worcester saw many unwonted sights. Three times they saw companies of armed men with green pine plumes in their hats come marching up Main Street and take possession of the Court House, while the Judges held brief sessions of the Court of Common Pleas in the United States Tavern. They saw Daniel Shays on a white horse, reviewing his rebel troops on Court House Hill, and later being escorted through the snowy streets to his lodgings at the house of Samuel Flagg, with music, and as much pomp as though he were a general. They saw the ranks of the insurgents, which neither zero weather nor hunger could break, wheel aside to let the local militia pass, rather than bring their revolt to a bloody issue.

Nor was Worcester untouched by the financial confusion which always results when war is a paramount public interest for any length of time. It is recorded that after the Revolutionary War, one out of every four persons in the Commonwealth was involved in some kind of legal action for debt, and there were not a few residents of Worcester who came home from the war to find that their patriotism had led to poverty. Industries were crippled, the burden of state and national debt the war had piled up made currency almost valueless, and morals had been relaxed.

The courts, as the machinery for adjustment of private debts, were swamped with lawsuits, and the slowness with which they proceeded was causing deep discontent. To some veterans of the war the delay became so unbearable a grievance that they took up arms against one of the institutions they had been fighting eight years to preserve. These insurgents, or "regulators" as they called themselves, determined to stop the courts entirely, so that their creditors would be powerless, without judicial right, to press claims against them.

# BOSTON AND WORCESTER RAILROAD.



THE Passenger Cars will continue to run daily from the Depot near Washington street, to Newton, at 6 and 10 o'clock, A. M. and at 3½ o'clock, P. M., and Returning, leave Newton at 7 and 11½ A. M. and a quarter before 5, P. M.

Tickets for the passage either way may be had at the Ticket Office, No. 617 Washington street; price 37½ cents each, and for return passage of the Master of the Cars, Newton. By order of the President and Directors, may 29 1853 F. A. WILLIAMS, Clerk.



# BOSTON AND WORCESTER RAILROAD.

THE Passenger Cars will hereafter run daily from the Depot near Washington street, to Needham, at 6 and 10 o'clock, A. M. and at 3½ and 5½ o'clock, P. M. Returning, leave Needham at a quarter past 7 and a quarter past 11, A. M. and a quarter before 5, and a quarter before 7, P. M.

They will stop at Brighton, Angler's Corner, and Newton, to take in passengers.

Tickets for the passage either way may be had at the Ticket Office, No. 617 Washington street; price 37½ cents each, and for return passage of the Master of the Cars, Needham and Newton.

Passengers in the first afternoon trip, may secure places from Needham to Worcester and the intermediate towns, in the Rail Road line of Coaches, by application at 36 Nantow street. Fare from Boston to Worcester \$2.

By order of the President and Directors, July 10 1853 F. A. WILLIAMS, Clerk.



# BOSTON AND WORCESTER RAILROAD.

THE Cars will run at present as follows: they will leave the Depot No. 617 Washington street, for Needham, at 6 o'clock, A. M. Returning, leave Needham at a quarter past 7.

The Cars will leave the Depot for Hopkinton daily at 8½ A. M. and at 3½ P. M.

Returning, will leave Hopkinton at 10½ A. M. and at 5½ P. M.

They will stop each way at Brighton, Angler's Corner, Newton, Needham and Clarke's.

Tickets for the passage either way may be had at the Ticket Office, No. 617 Washington street; and for return passage of the Master of the Cars.

By order of the President and Directors, July 10 1853 F. A. WILLIAMS, Clerk.



# BOSTON AND WORCESTER RAILROAD.

THE Railroad will be opened for the conveyance of passengers and merchandize from Boston to Westboro', This Day.

The passenger cars will leave Boston this day at 8 o'clock A. M. and 1 P. M. and will arrive at Westboro' at 10 o'clock and 3. Returning, they will leave Westboro' at half past 10 and at 3, and will arrive in Boston at 12 and at 5. On Monday, the 17th inst. the passenger cars will commence running daily, as follows:

Leave Boston at	7 o'clock, A. M. and 3½ P. M.
do Newton	7½ 3½
do Needham	7¾ 4
do Frammingham	8 4½
do Hopkinton	8¼ 4¾
Arrive at Westboro'	9 5½
Returning,	
Leave Westboro'	8 A. M. and at 2½ P. M.
do Hopkinton	8¼ 3½
do Frammingham	8¾ 3¾
do Needham	9 4
do Newton	9¼ 4½
Arrive at Boston	10 5

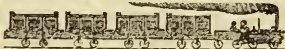
Stages will be provided to take passengers on the arrival of the cars at Westborough, every morning and evening to Worcester, every morning to Northampton and Springfield, by way of Brookfield and Ware, to arrive on the same day, and also every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, to Northampton, by way of New-Brantree and Enfield, and on every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday through Milbury to Dudley.

Stages will be also in readiness at Hopkinton, on the arrival of the cars, every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning to start for Hartford, where they will arrive the same day, and for Uxbridge every afternoon, where they will arrive the same evening.

Fare to Brighton and Newton corner, 25 cents, to Newton, 34 cents, to Needham, 45 cents to Frammingham, 70 cts. to Hopkinton, 75 cents, and to Westborough, \$1.

Freight to Hopkinton, \$2 per ton, to Westborough, \$2 \$0. n15 ept1

# Boston and Worcester Railroad.



THE Cars now leave the Depots in Boston and Worcester at the following hours, stopping at the Depots on the road:

From Boston to Worcester, 6 A. M., 12 M. and 4 P. M.

From Worcester to Boston, 6 A. M., 12 M. and 4 P. M.

Price of Tickets to Worcester, \$1.50.

Passengers by this road will find conveniences at Worcester, for Springfield, Northampton, Hartford, Norwich, Keene, &c. &c.

Arrangements have been made, to have Carriages ready on the arrival of the Cars in Boston, to take passengers to any part of the city, at the following fares:

Omniabus or Stage Coach Passengers, 20 cents each;

Hacks, with 4 passengers and usual baggage, 25 cents each;

Hacks with 4 passengers without baggage, 20 cents each;

Hacks with single passenger and extra baggage, 50 cents;

Hacks with two passengers and extra baggage, 37½ cents each.

July 8, 1853.

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## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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Their first visit to Worcester was early in September, 1786. Captain Adam Wheeler, a church warden and a respected citizen of Hubbardston, led almost a hundred of them. They took their stand about the Court House and set a sentinel to challenge all comers. On the morning of September 5th the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas left Judge Allen's house, where they had assembled, in the usual impressive procession. The members of the bar, the sheriff, the Clerk, and the Justices of the Sessions walked with them, and at their head was Chief Justice Artemas Ward, the beloved hero of the evacuation of Boston.

The sentinel leveled his musket at them as they approached the Court House. But at one word from Justice Ward, who had been his commander in the war, he lowered it, and saluted respectfully. With firm steps and great dignity, the old general continued to lead the way, and the crowds parted to let him pass. The scene became highly dramatic. On the Court House steps stood a row of men with fixed bayonets. Without the slightest hesitation he advanced until his breast touched their glittering points.

"Who is in command here?" he demanded in a powerful voice. "By what authority and for what purpose are you here?"

Captain Wheeler, whose sword was drawn, answered that until conditions were righted, the courts were to be stopped—that he had force to do it.

The Court House doors opened, revealing a company of infantry ready for action. He then demanded that the session be adjourned indefinitely. The military figure of the Justice stiffened, and his voice rang out: "I do not value your bayonets. You can plunge them into my heart, but while it beats, I will do my duty. When I do otherwise, my life is of little consequence. Take away your bayonets, and let me speak to my fellow citizens."

"Charge!" came the order. The drum was beat and the guard pressed forward until their bayonets pierced Justice Ward's clothing. But he remained motionless. His bravery had its effect. After a tense moment, the soldiers fell back, and allowed him to mount the steps. For almost two hours he pointed out to the crowd the evil of treason and its terrible results. But the rebels had won the day. They kept control of the Court House, and for two days after paraded triumphantly about Worcester. The Judges met in the United States Arms Tavern, but no official business was transacted.

On the 21st of November, the Court of Sessions, which dealt with criminal cases, was to convene, and, although this had no bearing on the wrongs of the insurgents, twice as many of them as before gathered to oppose it. This time it was the Sheriff, Colonel William Greenleaf of Lancaster, who tried to persuade them to disperse. While he was speaking on the Court House steps, some one in the crowd shouted that he, as a sheriff, was a public wrong, and that his fees were too high, especially for criminal executions. "If you consider my fees excessive," he replied, "you need not count *them* a grievance any longer, for I assure you, Gentlemen, that I will hang you all, for nothing, with the



**RULES AND REGULATIONS**  
**TO BE OBSERVED AT THE**  
**Cattle Show and Exhibition of**  
**Manufactures,**  
 In Worcester, on the 7th October, 1859.

1. Marshals will be appointed to preserve order, and to carry into effect the arrangements of the day. It is expected and required of every person attending the Show, to follow their direction, and those of the Trustees, that regularity may be observed.

2. The Trustees will be in session, at *Eagles Hotel*, at 8 o'clock, A. M. for the admission of Numbers, and the transaction of all necessary business. The Society will move in procession, *graciously* at 11 o'clock, to the South Meeting-House, where Prayers will be offered, and an Address delivered. The names of the gentlemen appointed Judges, and other arrangements, will then be announced.

3. All Stock offered for Premiums must be put in the pens designated by the Marshals, before 9 o'clock, A. M. and remain subject to their direction. And an entry of the same, stating the age and description of the animal exhibited, the name of the owner, &c. must be made in the book of the Assistant Secretary.

4. Gentlemen having animals of a superior size or quality, which it may not be intended to offer for premiums, are requested to add to the interest of the scene, by exhibiting them in pens which will be allotted for that purpose; and, by entering them in the Secretary's Book, they will be placed under the care of the Marshals, and subject to the same regulations as other animals.

5. Animals must not be removed from the pens in which they are first placed, without the permission of a Marshal.

6. The avenue between the ranges of pens is intended exclusively for the Trustees, Judges and Members of the Society. It is therefore expected that no others will enter the same but by the permission of a Marshal.

7. All articles offered under the heads of *Domestic and Household Manufactures*, must be exhibited in a building, which will be provided for the purpose, before 9 o'clock, A. M. A person will attend to arrange them according to their entry in the Secretary's Book, and will receive the certificates that the articles were manufactured in the County of Worcester.

8. Original and improved Machines for facilitating Agricultural Labour, must be placed, before 9 o'clock, A. M. in or near the building assigned for Specimens of Manufactures, and will be under the direction of a person appointed by the Trustees to receive them. The necessary explanations respecting them, and all communications relating to Agricultural Improvements, will be received at *Eagles Hotel*, by the Judges appointed to consider and decide upon them.

9. Each Committee will make and publish such other Rules and Regulations as they may find necessary in the discharge of the trust assigned to them; and all persons concerned will conform thereto.

10. The Premiums will be awarded in the Meeting-House, at 5 o'clock, P. M.

A PUBLIC DINNER will be provided for the Society, and all other gentlemen who may be disposed to honour the occasion with their presence, at *Eagles Hotel*. Tickets may be obtained of Mr. *Eagles*, at his bar.  
**DANIEL WALDO,**  
**THEOPH. WHEELER,**  
**NATHL P. DENNY,**  
**LEVI LINCOLN, jun.**  
**EDWARD D. BANGS.**

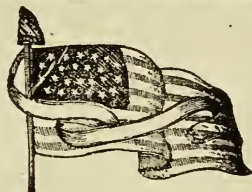
Worcester, Sept. 14, 1859.

From the Spy Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill  
 Regulations for the first Cattle Show and  
 Exhibition of Manufactures.

**The Massachusetts Spy.**

The Liberty of the Press is essential to the Security of Freedom.

**WORCESTER:**  
**NINTH MONTH (SEPT.) 9, 1859.**



**FREE SOIL NOMINATIONS.**

Presidential Election, Tuesday, Nov. 2d.

FOR PRESIDENT,  
**JOHN P. HALE,**  
 OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

FOR VICE PRESIDENT,  
**GEORGE W. JULIAN,**  
 OF INDIANA.

**Free Democratic State Convention.**

Notice is hereby given, that the Annual State Convention of the Free Democratic party of Massachusetts will be held at LOWELL, on WEDNESDAY, September 15th, at 11 o'clock, A. M., to nominate candidates for the offices of Governor, and Lieutenant Governor, and also, Presidential Electors; and to consider and adopt such measures as may be deemed just and necessary, in order to promote the great cause of Freedom throughout the Union, and equal rights and representation throughout the Commonwealth.

The several cities and towns are requested to choose delegates to the Convention, in the proportion of three for every Representative in the General Court, to which they are by law entitled.

The Free Democratic Committee in the several cities and towns, are requested to take forthwith all needed steps to secure a full representation of that portion of the people who consider the claims of Justice and Liberty, paramount to those of party.

By order of the State Central Committee,  
**HENRY WILSON, Chairman.**  
**Edw. L. Kirtle, Sec'y.**

**Grand Rally**  
**OF THE FREE DEMOCRACY.**

The Free Democracy of Worcester County, and of the State generally, are hereby informed that the Free Democracy of the city propose to hold a

**Grand Mass Meeting,**  
 in WORCESTER, on TUESDAY Evening, Sept. 14th,  
 upon which occasion

**Hon. CHARLES ALLEN**

will address his constituents upon the political questions of the times.

Other distinguished speakers have also been invited to address the people on this occasion, and those who come may be assured of a cordial Free Soil welcome, and a good time generally. Delegates from other portions of the State, who will pass through Worcester en route for Lowell, are especially invited to make their arrangements to tarry here over night, and see how the Beacon Trees of Liberty are hurrying upon the hill tops of old Worcester.

Arrangements have been made for the Worcester County delegation to enter Lowell in a body, and to make this city the rallying point as far as possible. Come then brethren all, and unite with us on the 14th, in this demonstration in favor of Free Speech, Free Soil, and Free Men, and help us to agitate the political elements for the hastening of that day when Slavery and not Freedom shall be sectional, and Liberty not Slavery shall be National.

For order of the City Committee,  
 Sept. 8th. **daw814** **T. DREW, Sec'y.**

**GREAT MEETING!**

THERE will be a Meeting of the Citizens of Worcester and vicinity, at the CITY HALL, in Worcester, on THURSDAY (to-morrow) Evening, Sept. 9, when

**HON. HENRY WILSON**

will address the people in a review of the Resolutions of the Whig State Convention, and in defense of the motives, objects, and results of the Coalition, against the attacks of those Resolutions.

Citizens, of all parties, are invited to attend.

From the Spy Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill  
 Nominations of the Free Soil Party in the  
 Presidential Election of 1852.

CLIPPINGS FROM THE SPY

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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greatest of pleasure." In the laughter that followed, a sly hand reached out and placed a pine branch, the emblem of the rebels, in his hat. Totally unaware of it, the Sheriff proceeded to read the riot act, and later he marched solemnly away with the Judges, still wearing it. Under that date, in the town records, the Clerk had to write, for the only time, that an armed force had prevented the holding of court.

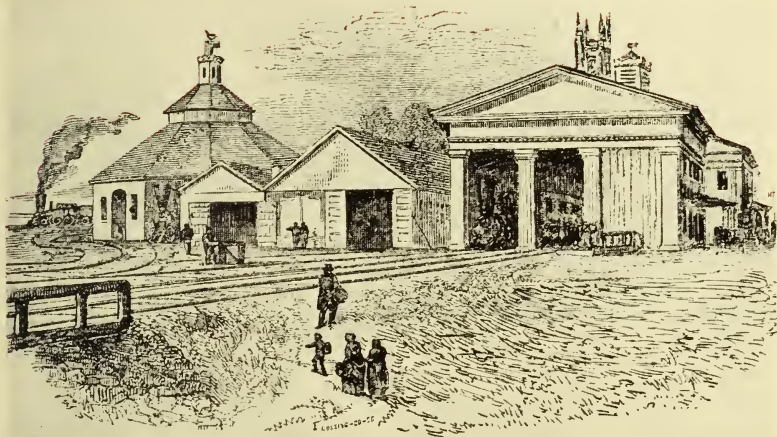
Two humorous happenings and a steady reign of excitement for several days marked the next invasion by Shays's troops. By now, the rebels were not the only soldiers who bore arms in Worcester. With Joel Howe as captain, two companies of the local militia drew up on December 4th before the United States Arms Tavern. The insurgents had their headquarters there, not knowing that the court they had come to stop would meet on December 6th at the Sun Tavern only long enough to adjourn until January 23d, by the Governor's orders; for the insurrection had now become a state affair. The opposing forces advanced upon each other. Closer and closer they came, and it seemed as though many lives were in danger. But the ranks that wore the evergreen suddenly bent. Brave soldiers as they were, and eager for the relief of the country's distress, they would not start an actual civil war. The militia passed by them, and from that moment, as far as the people of Worcester were concerned, Shays's Rebellion ceased to be taken seriously.

Still waiting for the court day to come, the insurgents took up their station at the Court House, and a detachment of them went to the Hancock Arms for the night. It was bitterly cold, and heavy snow was falling, so the sentinels at the tavern left their posts and went inside to get warm. Some boys of the town, seeing their abandoned weapons in the hall, quietly carried them away. They then came back and called in through the window to the group around the fire, "Here come the Light Horse!" In great alarm, the guards ran for their weapons, and not finding them, lost no time in joining their comrades at the Court House. None of the insurgents slept that night. Even after the rifles were found, the mischievous boys kept coming at intervals and giving the false alarm.

William Lincoln in his History of Worcester gives a delightful account of the troubles the next night brought to the men at the Hancock Arms. Dr. Samuel Stearns of Paxton was sent for in a great hurry, when several of the men became violently ill, after a round of drinks. Being more of an almanac maker than a doctor, he at once assured the victims and the anxious listeners that their rum contained a fatal poison. The soldiers heard him aghast. Those already ill became immediately worse. Their groans were added to by the others, who anticipated the horrible death the doctor pictured. Several of them went to the home of Daniel Waldo, from whose store the sugar in the rum had been bought, and made him come with them to the tavern. Daniel Waldo was one of the wealthiest and most respected men of Worcester, and his allegiance to the government in the crisis had been open and fearless. The rebels believed he had deliberately planned their ruin. But

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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*From Bradbury & Guild's Railroad Chart, 1847*

*Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

## FOSTER STREET STATION—TRAIN ENTRANCE

The roundhouse at the left.

a careful test of the sugar, by Doctor Green of Ward, who had responded to the frantic calls for medical assistance, and subsequent questioning of the clerk who had sold it, showed that there was nothing in the sugar more serious than some good Scotch snuff which had accidentally blown into the bin. Rapid recoveries were brought about by this news, and on the next day, which was Wednesday, all the insurgents in Worcester, now numbering eight hundred, marched before Daniel Shays in review.

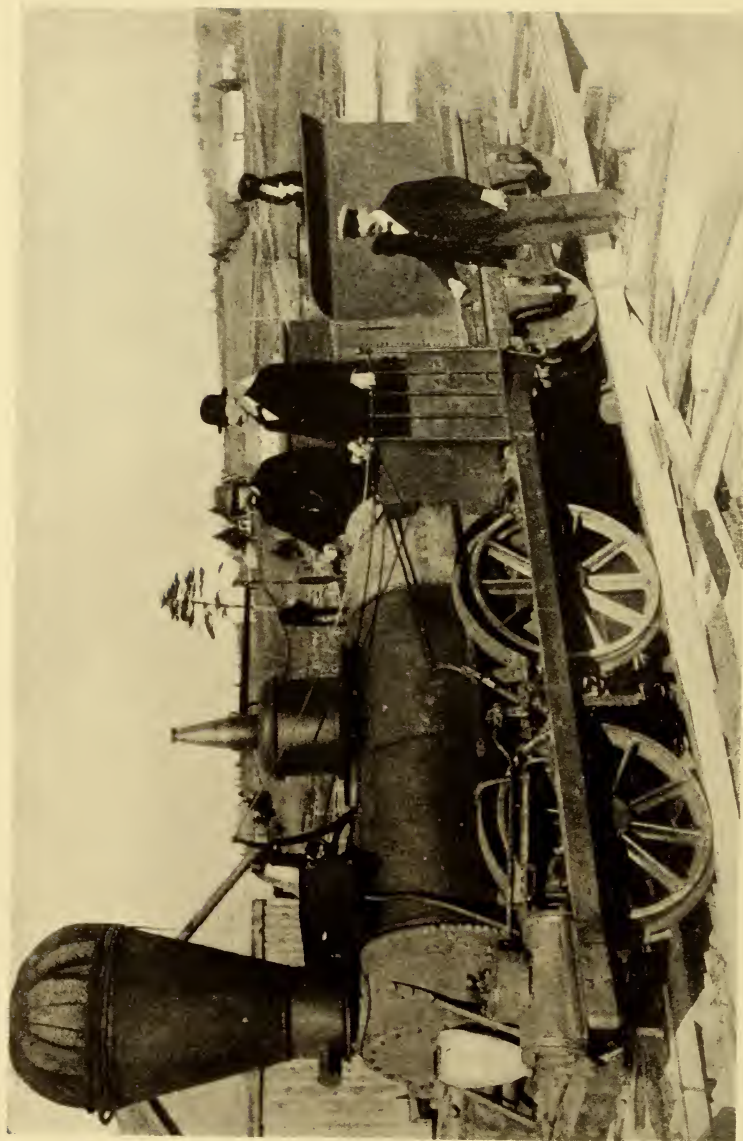
The court had done what they desired without any effort on their part. But they lingered in Worcester, patrolling the icy streets, and stopping influential townspeople, who had censured them. Levi Lincoln, Mr. Justice Washburn of Leicester, and Justice Baker were among the ones they accosted.

On Saturday, they disbanded temporarily. But their parade before their headquarters was the last one they had in Worcester.

By January 23d, the time which would have brought the rebels back, the government had raised an army of over four thousand men, and there were enough of them placed in Worcester to make an excursion into the town impossible for the rebels. The Judges entered the Court House unmolested.

Worcester was well represented in General Benjamin Lincoln's line. Dr. Oliver Fiske, then a young man teaching school at Lincoln, secured a substitute, and joined a band of Light Horse. Joel Howe, William Treadwell, Phinehas Jones and Daniel Goulding were at the head of companies in which, among the privates from Worcester,





*From a photograph*

### THE LOCOMOTIVE LION

Built at the Bury works, Liverpool, England, in 1835, the Lion was in use on the Boston and Worcester railroad thirty-two years. After this picture was made, a cab, truck wheel and cow catcher were added, and the name was changed to Brookline. Even later it was called the Farmingdale, and in all ran seven hundred thousand miles — more than any other locomotive in the United States.

*Collection of Worcester Historical Society*

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

were enlisted such prominent men as Timothy Bigelow, Edward Bangs and Theophilus Wheeler. Jonathan Rice, a deputy sheriff, was shot in the arm, and Samuel Flagg and John Stanton, also of Worcester, were freed by a surprise attack from a tavern at New Braintree where one of Shays's assistants, Luke Day, held them captive.

The insurrection collapsed at the state arsenal in Springfield, on January 25th, when the rebels fled as the government troops fired the first howitzer.

### THE FIRST CATTLE SHOW ON THE COMMON

*October 7, 1819*

All during the summer of 1819, the *Spy* and the *Ægis* informed their readers of the progress of the preparations being made for the cattle show by a committee composed of Daniel Waldo, Theophilus Wheeler, Nathaniel Denny, Levi Lincoln, Jr. and Edward Bangs. The state legislature, in order to promote interest in agriculture and in home manufactures, had offered to devote a certain sum of money toward prizes to each county which would establish an association with a membership of five hundred. Worcester County Agricultural Society had been started in 1818, and the membership was five hundred and fifty when it held its first exhibition on the Worcester Common. The animals were assigned to two rows of thirty pens each, with a wide aisle between them, and all their owners led them there before nine o'clock. The judges went around and made their decisions as rapidly as they could. At eleven o'clock the Common was deserted save for the unconscious contestants, while more than two thousand people met in the Old South Meeting-house for a formal opening of the show. "A prayer was offered by Rev. Doct. Bancroft, and the Address of the Hon. Levi Lincoln Jr. was such as the distinguished talents of the Orator and the importance of the occasion warranted us to expect. . . . He depicted in glowing but correct colors the many advantages natural and acquired of New England."

As the crowd left the meeting-house, it formed into a procession, and "led by a band of musick belonging to the 1st Brigade 7th Division, who volunteered their services at the request of Brigadier General Thomas Chamberlain," it encircled the pens in a gala march. Groups were then formed and tours of inspection and criticism began.

The animals, of course, claimed the greatest attention. But there were many who lingered before the exhibit of broadcloth and carpeting entered by manufacturing companies and individuals. "Skeins of tow yarn spun on a great wheel by a lady of Worcester" are given mention in the account, which was no doubt prepared by the Society's secretary, as both local papers contain it. Specimens of colored sewing silk are also noted.

Among the inventions and improved devices were "a turnip slicer, a drilling machine, a garden rake with a double row of teeth, a Skotch churn and a straw cutter."

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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There were also presented a great variety of vegetables of extraordinary size, among which were 7 Swedish Turnips or Ruta Baga of the average weight of 10 lbs. each; from a field of a quarter of an acre, in which were growing many of equal size by Hon. Levi Lincoln, Jr., of Worcester: A Winter Squash weighing 115 lbs. by Thomas W. Ward of Shrewsbury, another weighing 126 lbs. by Mr. Aaron Rogers of Holden, a remarkably large Summer Squash and a Cucumber by Hon. Daniel Waldo of Worcester—a very large Winter Squash by Edward D. Bangs, measuring in length 3 feet 4 inches, and a monstrous pumpkin by Ward N. Boylston.

The members of the association had a dinner at Eager's Hotel, and in the afternoon fifteen yoke of oxen were put to a test on Baptist Hill, now Salem Square, "to try their strength and docility and the perfectly good management of their drivers." First they were fastened in single yoke to a load of stone; then to a drag on a traveled path,—and after that, they plowed a given stretch of land. This was an event much talked of beforehand, and it drew great crowds to watch it.

## VISIT OF LAFAYETTE

*September 2, 1824*

Every one in Worcester wanted to see Lafayette. Crowds began to collect on the streets as early as 8 A.M., September 2d, and the more enterprising walked out as far as Clark's Tavern, two miles north of the town, to await his coming.

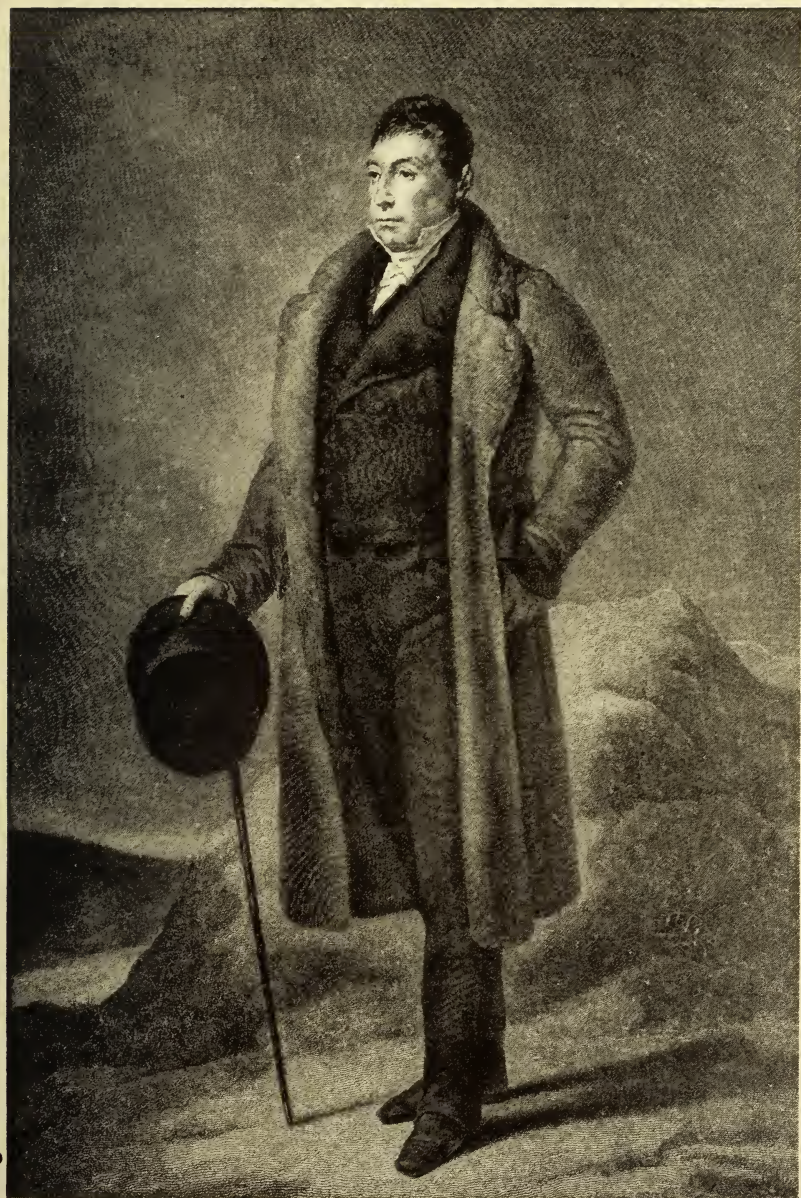
A generation had passed since the Marquis de Lafayette, a boy of nineteen, had chartered a ship and made a fifty-four-day trip to America, defying his family and his king to offer his money and sword to the cause of liberty. His pluck and coolness under fire won him a generalship by the side of men twice his age, while his simplicity of manner and his youthful enthusiasm endeared him to every soldier in the patriot army from Washington down.

All the schoolboys who stood on the street knew the story. In their minds it surpassed in action and adventure any fiction they had read. Foremost in the thoughts of the women who waited were, perhaps, the tales of how the great man was as gallant a lover as a soldier, and that his wife Adrienne, herself of noble family, had endured two years of ill-nourishment and misery rather than leave her husband alone in the German and Austrian prisons where his exertions for freedom in France brought him. But the old men were the most eager. With the sight of Lafayette would come memories of their youth and of the campaigns in which they had taken part.

Excited surmises must have run through the crowd. "Will he have on his uniform and the sword that Congress gave him?" "Will his little boy who is named for Washington be with him?" "Will he remember us?" "Will he be as much changed as we are?"

Shortly after half-past ten the questions were answered. First came the militia headed by Captain Estabrook, then the coach which brought





*From a print of a portrait by Ary Scheffer*

*Courtesy of The Bostonian Society*

LAFAYETTE

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

Lafayette from Bolton where he had spent the night at the home of S. V. S. Wilder. There was a great pressing forward to catch a glimpse of him as he stepped into the barouche with Judge Levi Lincoln, Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements.

Lafayette was now sixty-eight years old, and his military figure, slightly under six feet, had a tendency to portliness. "He had strong, full features, prominent eyes and eyebrows, but his high forehead was somewhat concealed by a wig." He did not wear his uniform. With him was his son, shorter and darker than his father, a grown man with children of his own, Lafayette's valet, Bastien, and his secretary, Auguste Levasseur, who wrote a detailed account of the entire trip.

Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Ward gave the signal for his regiment of light troops, which accompanied the Committee of Arrangements, to fall into line, and the procession started. The constant applause along the way swelled now and then as Lafayette grasped the hand and recalled the name of one of his former soldiers. The newspaper accounts cite that he remembered names and incidents not only in Worcester, but in his triumphal march all over the country.

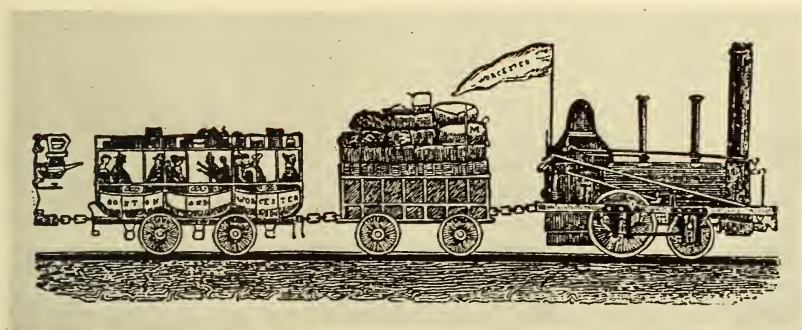
As he passed under the flags at Dr. Paine's house, a national salute was fired and bells rang loudly. Court House Hill was decorated by a large arch, and on either side of the road, children, whose parents had not seen Revolutionary times, threw laurel for his carriage to pass over. The Worcester Bank had hung in front of it several flags, and the motto, "Hitherto I have only cherished your cause: now I go to serve it." This was the reply Lafayette made to Silas Deane and Benjamin Franklin, the American Commissioners in Paris, who knew the discouraging state of America in December, 1776, when Lafayette consulted them, and tried to dissuade him from starting on so uncertain a mission. On a banner further along were the names of the battles in which Lafayette fought—Brandywine, Jamestown, Valley Forge and Yorktown.

It was almost noon before the four gray horses which drew Lafayette's barouche stopped at the white portico of Judge Lincoln's mansion, where the party was to have breakfast. Here, as all along the way, there were shouts of welcome as Lafayette alighted and went up the walk, limping slightly, and nodding benevolently to left and right. On the porch of his home, Judge Lincoln welcomed him in behalf of the town, and Lafayette in reply expressed his pleasure at seeing signs of such prosperity and happiness on every side. No doubt the one carpeted room, which to the people of Worcester symbolized the simple tastes of the wealthy Lincoln family, was thrown open, as well as every other room in the spacious home, for the ladies who wished to be presented to Lafayette and for his old comrades in arms.

No mention is made of a band as having a place in the procession, but there must have been music at two o'clock when Lafayette took his place at the gate and reviewed the troops "whose appearance and equipment was not excelled by any body of militia in the United States." Soon after he took his departure, accompanied for four miles



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER



*From a print*

*Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

## THE APPEARANCE OF THE FIRST RAILROAD TRAIN

on his way to New York by the Committee. To one of them, in speaking of the reception Worcester had given him, he said, "It is the homage you pay to the principles of your government—not to me."

Those who saw that day never forgot it. They talked of the great man and his "kindly look." They heard with interest echoes of balloon ascensions, fireworks, bonfires, balls, banquets, illuminations and parades with which the Nation elsewhere honored its guest, and of the gifts offered to him, varying from a handsomely equipped carriage to a pair of tame geese.

## OPENING OF THE BOSTON AND WORCESTER RAILROAD

*July 4, 1835*

One of the people who watched the approach of the first train to Worcester—an inmate of the asylum—remarked that "he never saw a critter go so fast with such short legs!" The story was printed in the *Spy*, and was retailed upon the streets for a long time after the celebration was over. For this was not an abnormal impression, after all. "It appears like a thing of life!" wrote Christopher Columbus Baldwin in his diary, after he had seen a train at Needham and ridden in it to Boston. It is in the same diary, written while the author was Librarian of the American Antiquarian Society, from 1829 until his premature death in a stage-coach accident in Norwich, Ohio, in August, 1835, that the most vivid account of the important event in Worcester's history is found:

JULY 4, 1835.

The road was publicly opened today, and the first train of cars reached Worcester at half past ten in the forenoon. The streets were thronged with people from the adjoining towns at an early hour, and these, with our population, presented a larger multitude in the town than I have ever before witnessed. Few of them had ever seen carriages moved by steam, and their



*From a photograph*

*Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

## FOSTER STREET STATION — PASSENGER ENTRANCE

curiosity was very great. The sides of the road were lined with people for nearly a mile, all equally eager to have a glimpse of the novel and marvellous spectacle. It being the 4th of July, which is, perhaps, our greatest holy day in the year, made the collection of people greater than it might otherwise have been. The females were almost as numerous as the males.

That I might witness the entry of the first train of cars to the greatest advantage, I invited the Hon. Joseph Kendall, Clerk of the Courts, who is my fellow boarder, to accompany me in a waggon to a high ground above Pine Meadow where the road may be seen for near a mile. We were told that the cars would arrive at Worcester at half past eight, and we accordingly, that we might lose no part of the interesting exhibition, took our station upon the hill at ten minutes past eight. . . . I sat in the waggon and held the horse. The day was a very warm one, and as I had no protection from the sun, I was nearly roasted. The cars came at half past ten instead of half past eight. . . . When they came in sight, my horse took fright, and I was compelled to get out of the waggon and had great difficulty in holding him. He reared and jumped most furiously, and when he was so far recovered as to permit me to look around, the train of cars had reached their destination!

A small, squat locomotive and eleven passenger cars made up the first train which came puffing into the old depot on Foster Street. In the early days of railroading—and the Boston and Worcester was the first railroad of any length in Massachusetts—it was the locomotive, and not as now the passenger cars it pulls, for which a personality was created by calling it a distinctive name. Just what were the names of

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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the two engines fresh from England, which worked on July 4th cannot be said with certainty. The famous "Farmingdale" started its thirty-two years of service on the Boston and Worcester Railroad very soon after that date, and it may have drawn one of the trains which first came to Worcester.

The passenger cars looked like stage coaches. "The entrance was on the side, and the conductor had to walk along a narrow platform on the outside, holding on by an iron rod at the top of the car while he collected the fares." Fifteen hundred excited people, in all, were carried that day. Two trains made complete trips from Boston to Worcester and back again, the time for a trip from Boston to Worcester being three hours and a quarter. The fare was \$1.50. Later, when a regular schedule was established, the fare was increased to \$2.00, and the trip took much less time.

Worcester manufactures and commerce had been flourishing since 1828, because of the Blackstone Canal. Benjamin Wright, the engineer of the Erie Canal, had planned this waterway, stretching from Worcester forty-five miles to Providence. It floated boats seventy feet long and nine feet wide, which were pulled by a two-horse tow line at the rate of four or five miles an hour. Its first boat, "The Lady Carington," created stir enough when the initial trip was made on October 6, 1828, but the first railroad train, because of the rapidity of its approach and the wonder of steam's agency, was a greater sensation.

The Blackstone Canal had encouraged the building of factories along its banks. It had established connections with trade centers, as stage coaches could never have done. Worcester was ready now for the railroad.

Within the next five years, the line was extended in one direction to Albany and Hudson, and in another to Norwich, where ferries went across to Long Island.

### THE SCHOOL STREET FIRE

*August 23, 1838*

A fire is doubly exciting if it comes when a town is in darkness. It was at one o'clock in the morning that the alarm of the School Street fire startled Worcester people from their beds. Current newspaper accounts fail to give details of the suspense and the spectacle of that night, but copies of a large canvas painted by George L. Brown, a well-known artist of that time, hung in many Worcester homes for years, and a glance at the picture often started recollections of some thrilling moments.

The fire was well under way before any one discovered it. It started in Henry Goulding and Company's factory, evidently from spontaneous combustion. Sixty thousand dollars' worth of machinery for knitting and weaving woolens was made there annually, and a combination of the vitriol used and iron filings may have brought it about.





*From a print of a painting*

SCHOOL STREET FIRE

*Collection of Perry Walton*

The Worcester Fire Department in its early days used this picture on its Membership Certificates, as this was the first big fire its members were called upon to fight after they organized in February, 1838. The painting was made by George L. Brown of Boston.

Little could be done toward saving either the Goulding shops, which were made of brick, or the valuable machinery which they contained. The firemen and the brigade of townsmen who rushed to School Street worked vigorously, but the whole building was ruined and, in it, sets of cherished tools owned by poor workmen.

The Boston and Worcester Stage Company lost its stables and carriage houses, although the horses were led out safely. North of the factory was a whole block of tenements,—wooden buildings in which five or six families lived. Once this caught fire, there must have been frantic attempts at gaining assurance that every one was out and that nobody rushed back for furniture or other possessions. Of all this, the papers say nothing.

Frederick W. Paine was the heaviest loser through the destructive blaze, as he was the owner of the tenements as well as of the Goulding factory building. The names of the companies by whom he was insured were the Worcester Mutual Insurance Company and the Manufacturers Mutual Insurance Company, but his losses were not completely covered.

A safe containing valuable papers withstood the flames and was found in the ruins when dawn came. The *Ægis* is authority for the story that "a number of swine belonging to the stable [of the Boston and Worcester Stage Company] with *singular presence of mind* took refuge under a pile of old lumber, which protected them from the reflected heat until morning, when they were taken uninjured from among the fallen rafters and decayed embers which surrounded them."



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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## VISIT OF CHARLES DICKENS

*February 5-7, 1842*

It is interesting to see the accounts the Worcester newspapers give of Dickens's visit to Governor John Davis, at his home on Lincoln Street.

The *Spy* of February 9th said:

Charles Dickens (Boz) the celebrated author, with his wife arrived in town on the evening of the 5th, and left for Hartford and Springfield on the morning of the 7th. While here, many of our inhabitants called on them at the mansion of Governor Davis, where they staid during their tarry in town.

The *Ægis* had on the editorial page a brief sketch of the author's life, and a most graphic description of his appearance:

### MR. DICKENS

The gentleman whose popularity is coextensive with the circulation of his writings came to Worcester on Saturday evening, with Gov. Davis at whose mansion he passed the Sabbath, and left town on Monday morning for Hartford.

The consent of *Mrs.* Davis, being understood, our citizens, ladies and gentlemen, called during the Saturday evening to pay their respects to the distinguished strangers—the ladies, of course, to see *Mrs.* Dickens, and the gentlemen for the purpose of manifesting civility to both.

As *Mr.* Dickens, by this time, is probably beyond the reach of our remarks, we venture upon a brief description of his person, for the benefit exclusively of those who have had no opportunity to see the lion of the day.

In the first place we must discard all the prints that have been issued, professing to be a likeness of "Boz." There is not one of them that does not give an entirely incorrect impression of his appearance. Neither his features, nor the *tout ensemble* of his expression, are, in our opinion, represented with an approximation to fidelity. Some of the portraits have a thoughtful and pensive air, with a dark, deep look to the eye, well enough adapted to the character of a quiet observer and reflective student; others represent a shorter and rounder visage, with the common countenance of a good looking, good tempered and intelligent young man; from all of them that we have seen, would be received the impression of Ionic locks, fair smooth forehead and cheeks and regular outlines of features; in none are the lines, nerves or muscles of the face delineated with any truth to nature. In fact the lines are deeply marked, the nerves and muscles strongly developed and active, arching eyebrows in conversation, and giving motion and variety of expression to every part of the countenance. The reality, therefore, accorded very little with our imagination of his appearance.

We found a middle sized person in a brown frock coat, a red figured vest, somewhat of the flash order, and a fancy scarf cravat, that concealed the dickey and was fastened to the bosom in rather voluminous folds by a double pin and chain. His proportions were well rounded and filled the dress he wore. His hair, which was long and dark, grew low upon his brow, had a wavy kink where it started from the head, and was naturally or artificially corkscrewed as it fell on either side of his face. His forehead retreated gradually from his

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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eyes, without any marked protuberance, save at the outer angle, the upper portion of which formed a prominent ridge a little within the assigned position of the organ of ideality. The skin on that portion of the brow which was not concealed by the hair, instead of being light and smooth, flushed as readily as any part of the face, and partook of its general character of flexibility. The whole region about the eyes was prominent, with a noticeable development of nerves and vessels indicating, say the phrenologists, great vigor in the intellectual organs with which they are connected. The eyeballs completely filled the sockets. The aperture of the lids was not large, nor the eye uncommonly clear or bright, but quick, moist and expressive. The nose was slightly aquiline—the mouth of moderate dimensions, making no great display of the teeth, the facial muscles occasionally drawing the upper lip most strongly on the left side, as the mouth opened in speaking. His features, taken together, were well proportioned, of a glowing and cordial aspect, with more animation than grace, and more intelligence than beauty.

We will close this off-hand description without going more minutely into the anatomy of Mr. Dickens, by saying that he wears a gold watch guard over his vest and a shaggy great coat of bear or buffalo skin that would excite the admiration of a Kentucky huntsman. In short, you frequently meet with similar looking men, at theatres and at other public places, and you would infer that he found his enjoyments in the scenes of actual life, rather than in the retirements of study: and that he would be likely to be about town and to witness those scenes which he describes with such unrivalled precision and power. We believe it is well understood that he draws his characters and incidents less from imagination than from memory,—depending for his resources less upon reflection and study than upon observation. His writings bear slight evidence of reading, and he seldom, if ever quotes from books. His wonderful perceptions, his acute sensibilities, and his graphic fancy furnish the means by which his fame has been created.

Mr. Dickens was born February 7th, 1812. He was therefore thirty years of age on Monday last. The early maturity of his genius and reputation has but few parallels. May he long live to edify and amuse the world, and to receive the reward of praise and emolument that is justly his due.

The *Palladium*, because it was politically out of sympathy with Governor Davis, contained a brief notice:

“Boz,” the author of *Pickwick*, etc., with his wife, came up from Boston on Saturday, with Governor Davis and passed the Sabbath with him. The Governor introduced his *general* friends to his guest on Saturday evening, and his *particular* friends to him on Sunday evening.

In 1842, Dickens was already the author of “*Pickwick*,” “*Oliver Twist*,” “*Nicholas Nickleby*,” “*The Old Curiosity Shop*” and “*Barnaby Rudge*,” so there were many people who tried to catch a glimpse of him. His impressions of Worcester are written in his “*American Notes*”:

A sharp dry wind and a slight frost had so hardened the roads when we alighted at Worcester, that their furrowed tracks were like ridges of granite. There was the usual aspect of newness on every object, of course. All the buildings looked as if they had been built and painted that morning, and could be taken down on Monday with very little trouble. In the keen evening air, every sharp outline looked a hundred times sharper than ever. The clean



*From a rare portrait*

*Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

CHARLES DICKENS

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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cardboard colonnades had no more perspective than a Chinese bridge or a tea-cup, and appeared equally well calculated for use. The razor-like edges of the detached cottages seemed to cut the very wind as it whistled against them, and to send it smarting on its way with a shriller cry than before. Those slightly-built wooden dwellings behind which the sun was setting with a brilliant lustre, could be so looked through and through, that the idea of any inhabitant being able to hide himself from the public gaze, or to have any secrets from the public eye, was not entertainable for a moment. Even where a blazing fire shone through the uncurtained windows of some distant house, it had the air of being newly-lighted, and of lacking warmth; and instead of awakening thoughts of a snug chamber, bright with faces that first saw the light round that same hearth, and ruddy with warm hangings, it came upon one suggestive of the smell of new mortar and damp walls.

So I thought, at least, that evening. Next morning when the sun was shining brightly, and the clear church bells were ringing, and sedate people in their best clothes enlivened the pathway near at hand and dotted the distant thread of road, there was a pleasant Sabbath peacefulness on everything, which it was good to feel. It would have been the better for an old church; better still for some old graves; but as it was, a wholesome repose and tranquillity pervaded the scene, which, after the restless ocean and the hurried city, had a doubly grateful influence on the spirits.

## GINERY TWICHELL'S FAMOUS RIDE

*January 23, 1846*

Anything Ginery Twichell did was of interest to the people of Worcester. A stage driver vied with the postmaster or the leading merchant in knowing and being hailed with friendliness by the greatest number of his fellow townsmen. And Ginery Twichell was one of the most affable of his profession. At nineteen, he began to take charge of the Barre and Worcester stage, and the testimony of every one who rode with him was that there was no comfort of his passengers which was overlooked, or no service which he did not perform with care and infinite good will. In ten years' time, he owned two hundred horses, and until the introduction of the railroad, his stage lines were the chief means of transportation in three or four states.

His love of adventure and skill as a horseman enabled him to take the personal responsibility for the carrying of news also, and it was in performing this important task that his record rides were made. It was his custom to collect the county election returns for the Boston *Atlas*, and once he won great praise for traveling most of the route alone, because the weather conditions were so bad that the men, who were to bring their returns from remote places to a central meeting place, did not come.

But the feat which made him famous was his ride on January 23, 1846. The question of the boundaries and the title of the future state of Oregon was at that time before Congress, after long-drawn-out arguing with Great Britain about her claims upon it. President Polk's message in December, 1845, had asserted confidently that the United



"Sammy" - said Mr. Weller, looking cautiously round. - "My duty to your Gov'nor, and tell him if he thinks better o' this here bis'ness to communicate with me. Me and a cabinet maker has devised a plan for settin' him out o' your pris'n. A pianner Samivel - a pianner -" said Mr. Weller, striking his son on the chest, with the back of his hand: and falling back a step or two.

"What do you mean?" said Sam.

"There aint no vurks in it," whispered his father. "It'll hold him easy, with his hat and shoes on; and breathe through the legs, vich is holler. Have a passage ready taken for 'Merriker. The 'Merrikin gov'ment vill never give him up, ven vunce they find as he's got money to spend, Sammy. Let the gov'nor stop there till Mrs. Bardell's dead or Mr. Dodson and Fogg's hung, vich last ewent I think is the most likely to happen first, Sammy; and then let him come back and write a book about the 'Merrikins as'll pay all his expenses and more, if he blows 'em up enough" -

/ Pickwick/

Charles Dickens

Worcester

22 May 1842.



From the original in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society

#### AN EXTRACT FROM PICKWICK PAPERS

[Dickens wrote these lines as a souvenir for one of the ladies in Governor Davis's family.]

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# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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*From a photograph*

*Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

## THE FIRST BRICK BLOCK IN WORCESTER

It is still standing at School and Thomas Streets.

States had an assured right to annex Oregon. Dispatches from England were therefore awaited with great interest, and each of the New York papers wanted to print first the news which the steamer "Hibernia" would bring to Boston.

The *Herald*, due to the usual enterprise of James Gordon Bennett, its editor, secured the exclusive right, so far as newspaper representatives were concerned, to the quickest means of transmission. It made arrangements for the dispatches to be brought on a special engine by the Boston and Norwich Railroad, which connected by boat with Long Island and thence to New York City. The only condition on which the other papers could secure such direct means was that the engine they chartered would leave Boston fifteen minutes after the *Herald's*. This condition was accepted, and when the second engine reached Worcester, Ginery Twichell met it and lost no time in taking the dispatches, and spurring his horse toward Hartford. It was real January weather, and the snowdrifts were high. In three hours and twenty minutes Ginery Twichell rode sixty-six miles (with a fresh horse at every ten miles) and arrived at Hartford in time to get a train which carried him thirty-six more miles to New Haven. At New Haven another horse was

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

ready for him, and he started off again, on the seventy-six-mile journey to New York. The result was that the *Tribune* and the *Journal of Commerce* had the news sooner than the *Herald*.

The picture "The Unrivalled Express Rider" tells the story of his experiences along the way better than words. It has the added value of being a good likeness of Ginery Twichell, who later became the president of the Boston and Worcester Railroad, a member of Congress and a man of influence and popularity.

## FIRST CITY ELECTION

*April 8, 1848*

No particular issue was involved in the first city election. For many years the Whigs were the dominant party in Worcester, and in the town elections they usually won the majority of offices. The first year under the city charter, however, an amalgamation of parties was attempted. Two tickets were made—the candidates, regardless of their leanings in national politics, being classed under either of two heads—the Citizens Party and the Temperance Party. Levi Lincoln, former Governor of the Commonwealth, and the Reverend Rodney A. Miller, minister of the Old South Church, ran a close race for mayor. The results, taken from the *Ægis* of April 12, 1848, were:

The election of officers for the City of Worcester took place on Saturday. The Hon. Levi Lincoln was elected Mayor. The votes were:

Whole number	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1529
For Levi Lincoln	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	833
“ Rodney A. Miller	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	653
Scattering	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	43

### FOR ALDERMEN

Ward No. 1	Perley Goddard	.	.	.	.	1497
“ “ 2	Benj. F. Thomas	.	.	.	.	858
“ “ 3	John W. Lincoln	.	.	.	.	855
“ “ 4	James S. Woodworth	.	.	.	.	1527
“ “ 5	Wm. B. Fox	.	.	.	.	1533
“ “ 6	James Estabrook	.	.	.	.	838
“ “ 7	Isaac Davis	.	.	.	.	1384
“ “ 8	Stephen Salisbury	.	.	.	.	863
“ “ 2	Ichabod Washburn	.	.	.	.	680
“ “ 3	Wm. A. Draper	.	.	.	.	683
“ “ 6	Lewis Chapin	.	.	.	.	681
“ “ 8	Wm. T. Merrifield	.	.	.	.	667
Scattering	.	.	.	.	.	38

The first eight above named are elected,—the lowest on the ticket by a majority of 80.





# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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## FORMATION OF THE FREE SOIL PARTY

*June 21, 1848*

Seventy-five years before the presidential election of 1848 turned upon the axis of Abolition, in their town meeting, the people of Worcester had instructed Joshua Bigelow, their representative to the General Court, "to resist the most distant approaches to slavery." It was fitting, then, that Worcester men should crowd the City Hall and make it echo with their approval of Charles Allen's speech, which in one evening did more definite harm to slavery, and showed a clearer way to bring about its settlement, than years of crafty compromising by ambitious statesmen.

Charles Allen had a presence and a gift of oratory which had stirred audiences before. He had been Judge of the Court of Common Pleas until 1844, and he held a position of honor in Worcester, where he had lived all his life. But it was his courage on this occasion which inspired him to eloquence he had never before equaled, — and which brought him before the whole country as a man of unflinching resolution. Because he dared to put into words the questions which the leading men of his day were evading, he deserves forever a place among famous Abolitionists.

Not only in Worcester did Charles Allen's voice rise in protest against the tacit countenancing of slavery by the New England Whigs who really believed it to be a wrong. He had been chosen as the Worcester County delegate to the Whig National Convention which had been held in Philadelphia on June 7th. The Whigs had a difficult time to select a candidate that year who would be neutral in his views on the slavery question, and yet popular enough to be elected. As history shows, that was a tense time in politics. Every new state which was admitted to the Union brought before the people the slavery problem, and so important an issue had it become that the Whigs were unwilling to make a declaration of their policy toward it, lest they lose the election. They therefore adopted no platform, and chose Zachary Taylor, the hero of the Mexican War, as their candidate. In this way it was hoped that the Whigs from New England,—the "Conscience Whigs" as they were called,—who opposed slavery, would be appeased as well as the "Cotton Whigs" of the South, who wanted slavery for the commercial advantages of it. A split in the party which this subject was threatening to cause was thus thought to be prevented.

But Charles Allen had heard read in the district convention which made him its delegate:

*Resolved:* that in addition to the former issues between the Whig Parties and their opponents, we recognize as another and most important one, our uncompromising opposition to any further extension of slavery over any territory of the United States, or to any legislature by the National government the specific object of which is to sustain the institution of slavery.

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

*Resolved:* that in the opinion of this convention no Candidate for the presidency can receive the electoral vote of Massachusetts who is not publicly known to be opposed to the extension of slavery.

Zachary Taylor was not publicly opposed to slavery,—in fact, he himself was a slaveholder.

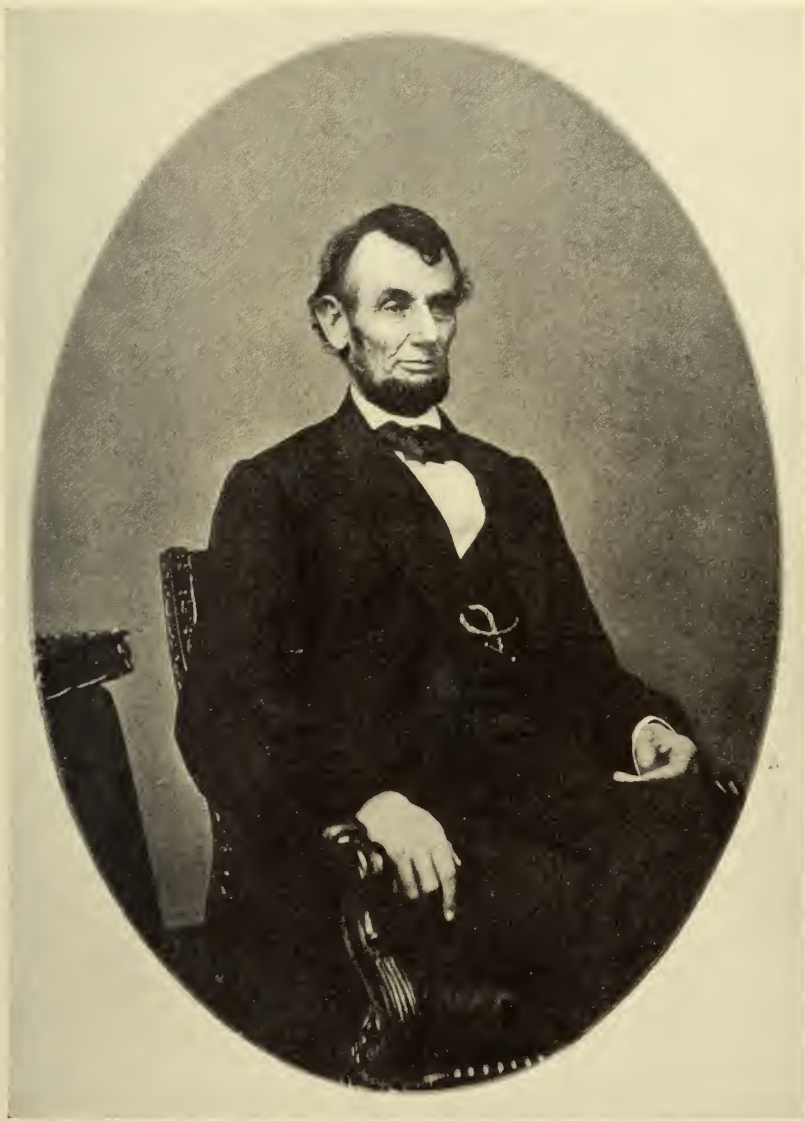
Judge Allen arose and addressed the Convention. He made himself heard with difficulty, for the minds of all the delegates were practically made up to the acceptance of Taylor and Millard Fillmore as the safest men to head the ticket. "I express for myself," he said, "what I believe to be the sentiments of my state and I say that this cannot go forth as the unanimous voice of this Convention. You have put one straw too much upon the back of Northern endurance. The Whig Party are not to be allowed to nominate their own statesmen. We declare the Whig Party of the Union this day dissolved."

This statement created a furor in the Convention. Judge Allen was ridiculed and rebuked not the least by the delegates from the state of Massachusetts. Henry Wilson of Natick alone stood by him.

The reception Charles Allen received on the night of June 21st when he came to give his report of the Convention at a meeting which Mr. H. H. Chamberlin had called to take place in the City Hall, was not such a one as a bolter from a National Convention might expect to receive. He was cheered as he entered the door, and the hall resounded with applause as he came to the platform. William W. Rice in his account of this meeting points out the fact that the press and the clergy gave little attention to it, and that the men who attended it were the "men from the shops who were really rulers of the city then, as they have been ever since."

Judge Allen spoke for two hours. In his youth he had read the Greek and Roman orators, and he knew the value of a rhetorical question. He said that he believed he had done nothing more than to carry out completely the duties the Worcester County people had given him when they had made him their delegate. "In the Convention," he said, "the inquiry was put around to the delegates of Massachusetts for the purpose of getting information, 'If General Taylor is nominated, will your district support him?' and when they came around to me, I said, 'No, gentlemen, my district will not support him.' 'There are men in your district who do not think as you do upon that subject,' I was told. 'Sir, who said so?' I asked. 'Governor Lincoln. Not by him only but by others was it reported that there was a strong sentiment here for General Taylor, and that the County of Worcester would go strongly in his favor,' was the reply. 'Now [turning to the Convention], am I right or was he?'"

The shouts which answered Judge Allen left no doubt in his mind that his hearers were with him heartily. "Most of us have belonged to the Whig Party," he went on when the enthusiasm had quieted. "We have professed to be averse to the extension of slavery. The question is not here whether we would eradicate it where it exists, but whether we are opposed to its extension. Well, Gentlemen, I did not



*From the photograph made by Brady in Washington, February 9, 1864*

*Collection of F. H. Meserve*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Mr. Robert Lincoln considers this the best likeness of his father.

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

eat my words at Philadelphia. Will you at the polls? When I declared the Whig Party was dissolved, I declared a fact."

After an exhortation to the young men to go forth and speak for what they knew was right, Judge Allen finished speaking. As he did so, his brother, the Reverend George Allen, came to the platform, and proposed the memorable resolution:

*Resolved:* that Massachusetts wears no chains and spurns all bribes; that Massachusetts goes now and will forever go for free soil and free men, for free lips and a free press, for a free land and a free world.

"It was adopted with shouts," says W. W. Rice, "and the great meeting adjourned, and its thousands poured out into the communities whence they came, devoted missionaries of the cause of free soil and free men."

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN ADDRESSED A WHIG MEETING IN THE CITY HALL

*September 12, 1848*

Abraham Lincoln carried away from Worcester at least one vivid memory. That was of the dinner which the hospitable Levi Lincoln gave at his home on Elm Street in honor of some of the men who had gathered for the Whig Convention in 1848.

In 1861, Lincoln received, in the White House, Henry J. Gardner, Governor of the Commonwealth from 1855 to 1858, who had been also a guest and a delegate from Boston to the Convention. He greeted him warmly. "You and I are no strangers," he said. "We dined together at Governor Lincoln's in 1848." "Yes," he went on, "I had been chosen to Congress then from the Wild West, and, with hayseed in my hair, I went to Massachusetts, the most cultured state in the Union, to take a few lessons in deportment. That was a fine dinner—a superb dinner—by far the finest I had ever seen. And the great men who were there, too!" He named most of them.

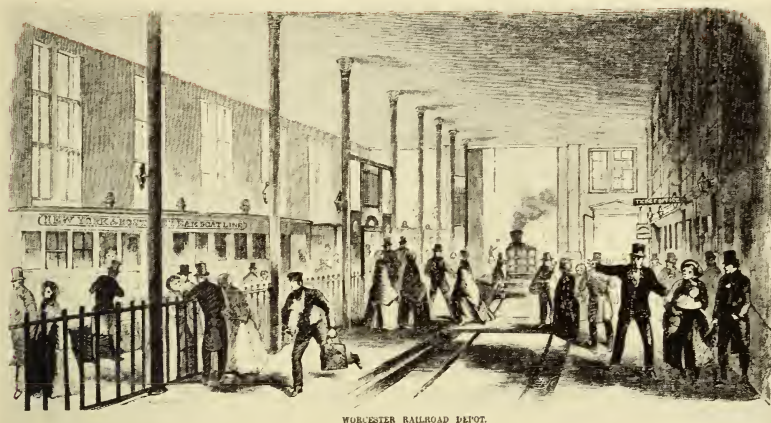
The speech Lincoln made in Worcester is the only one he ever made in New England which has been preserved. It was not delivered to the Convention proper, but at a rally meeting arranged by Alexander Bullock on the evening before the Convention opened.

Henry J. Gardner gives an account of the impression Lincoln made upon him, in a letter which Herndon's *Life of Lincoln* contains:

That evening there was held a mass meeting of delegates and others, and Lincoln was announced to speak. No one there had ever heard him on the stump before and in fact knew anything about him. When he was announced, his tall, angular bent form and his manifest awkwardness and low tone of voice promised nothing interesting. But he soon warmed to his work. His style and manner of speaking were novelties in the East. He repeated anec-



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER



From a print

*Worcester Historical Society collection*

WORCESTER RAILROAD DEPOT IN 1854

notes, told stories, admirable in humor and point, interspersed with bursts of true eloquence which constantly brought down the house. His sarcasm of Cass, Van Buren, and the Democratic Party was inimitable, and whenever he attempted to stop, the shouts of "Go on!" "Go on!" were deafening. He probably spoke over an hour, but so great was the enthusiasm, time could not be measured.

The local newspaper, while it did not print the speech or even quotations from it, was enthusiastic: "For conclusive reasoning and ready wit, the speech is unsurpassed in the campaign. It was listened to by the crowded audience with an untiring interest, applauded during its delivery and enthusiastically cheered at its close."

The Boston *Advertiser* printed the fullest report of what Lincoln said. He was whole-heartedly for Zachary Taylor, and believed then that slavery would eventually have its death blow through a strong Whig Party. Hon. Ira M. Barton, president of the Rough and Ready Club, presided at the meeting, and it was Ensign F. Kellogg of Pittsfield who introduced Lincoln.

Lincoln was not prominent in the Convention, but his name is among those who made "short and happy speeches" on Wednesday morning at the Foster Street Station. Arthur P. Rugg is authority for the fact that he wore on this occasion a long linen duster. He stopped at the Worcester House.



*From a print*

LINCOLN SQUARE IN 1852

*Worcester Historical Society collection*

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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## THE KANSAS EMIGRATION MEETING

*May 4, 1854*

One cold morning in early May, while the rain poured dismally, Edward Everett Hale addressed a meeting in the town hall. Although the newspapers of that time gave little space to what was said there, the great preacher himself wrote an impressive account of it, and of the spirit of the men who were present.

In the great Town Hall, in which I had often spoken to audiences of twelve hundred people, there were perhaps one or two hundred men,

Dr. Hale wrote in his article on the Kansas Emigration. It is to be found in Samuel Swett Green's compilation of the History of Worcester which Duane Hamilton Hurd included in his History of Worcester County.

They had the look of determination which belongs to the New Englander when he is well wound up and ready to start. People who were engaged at their daily business did not come to the meeting. As I recollect there were few persons there I had ever seen before, but I made some friends there who have been my friends to this day. A heavy storm was raging out of doors. There was no 'buncombe' nor 'popcock' in what we said. I was there to explain to them the practical method of going to Kansas, and as well as I knew how, I did so. These men asked questions,—and I gave them the best answers that I could. I said that we should arrange for parties of two or three hundred to go together, that we proposed to build for each colony, a central boarding house, or boarding houses, in which men could live while they were preparing their houses, and that we should make ourselves responsible for saw-mills, printing presses, and other necessary machinery. All these promises we kept. Mr. Thayer bade me say that there would be two thousand men from Massachusetts there in a short time. The prophecy of this was more than fulfilled.

Dr. Charles Robinson of Fitchburg, later the Governor of Kansas, also spoke to the gathering. He had just returned from exploring the land which they were to occupy and he had lived at one time in California, so his information was given from personal experience in pioneer life. Mr. Mallory and Mr. Fay also made speeches. Eli Thayer could not be present on account of illness.

But to Eli Thayer, the founder of the Oread Institute, Worcester owes the entire gratitude for conceiving and bringing to maturity the scheme for "Squatter Sovereignty" in Kansas, with which history will always connect its name as well as his. He spared no effort or no money to make the project a success. His careful planning anticipated the needs of the settlers he sent out to Kansas, just as thoroughly as his fervor won people to the support of his idea.

It will be recalled that the Missouri Compromise in 1820 had provided that slavery could exist in Missouri and all future states south of it, but that north of the 36° 30' parallel the territory was free. The



## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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opening of Kansas and Nebraska to settlement, which was agitated in 1854, would repeal the compromise, as the Kansas-Nebraska Bill contained a clause that the first settlers should determine by vote whether or not they wanted slavery.

This chance for "Squatter Sovereignty" would result in a triumph for the North or for the South, according to the character of the people who went out there. What could give a stronger blow to slavery than an organized colony whose members had all their lives looked upon it as a moral wrong? This was Eli Thayer's thought, and in March, 1854, he told of his plan at a meeting in the town hall. He obtained a charter for forming the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Company. Two Worcester men were members with Mr. Thayer of its executive committee: Alexander H. Bullock, who later became Governor of the state, and Edward Everett Hale. It was Eli Thayer who sent Dr. Robinson to Kansas on a trip of investigation. It was he who hired halls for meetings, and had notices printed which were written mostly by Dr. Hale.

Twenty dollars was the sum each emigrant paid and the company supplied tents, hatchets and plows.

The train which took the first group went through Worcester on July 17th, stopping to take aboard "twenty strong young men." The total number leaving Boston was 43. "Our friends will soon be in Kansas, the Eden of the West," said the *Spy* the next day, "and in a short time will be able to report progress, so that a second delegation of emigrants with all the elements of society and civilization—wives, children, printing presses, ballot boxes, schoolmasters and ministers may join them."

Kansas was admitted as a free state in 1861.

### THE BUTMAN RIOT

*October 30, 1854*

The Reverend Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Martin Stowell were arrested for taking part in a demonstration in Boston against the United States officers who led Anthony Burns back to slavery. But when a deputy marshal came to Worcester, supposedly for the purpose of taking away William Jenkins, one of its respected negro residents, it was these ardent Abolitionists, together with Stephen S. Foster and George Frisbie Hoar, who controlled their resentment, and by their words and their brave conduct made the story of the Butman riot one of the proudest records the city has.

News went rapidly around Worcester that Asa O. Butman was registered at the American Temperance House on the corner of Main and Foster Streets, almost as soon as he arrived. The *Spy* published it in a handbill, as a warning to the negroes in Worcester, many of whom had lived there as free men for a long time. At an anti-slavery meeting,



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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*From a print*

*Courtesy of the Worcester Public Library*

MAP OF WORCESTER IN 1878

which was held in the Town Hall, Sunday evening, the fact was announced also, and when the Town Vigilance Committee went after the meeting to watch the hotel, they were accompanied by enough angry people to alarm the man whom the *Spy* referred to as "the human bloodhound." All night the noise continued outside the hotel, and the excitement reached its climax when a pistol was seen in Butman's hand. At three o'clock in the morning a complaint was made to Judge Howe that Butman was carrying concealed weapons, and he was brought to court the next morning, charged with that offence.

He faced a larger and angrier crowd in the court room than he had the previous night, and he was so thoroughly frightened that he appealed to City Marshal Baker for protection. The Marshal took him to his own office in the Court House, and left him while he went outside to speak to the waiting mob. Then, again to quote the *Spy's* vivid account, "six or seven colored men broke in and dealt Butman a blow on the knowledge box which felled him to the ground." The Marshal returned in time to prevent further injury to the deputy. One of Butman's assailants was locked up, but as soon as the Marshal went out again, the negro jumped out of the window, a distance of twelve feet, and landed in the midst of the crowd. This was only an added excitement.

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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George Frisbie Hoar came out and spoke to the crowd:

Fellow citizens: It is some ten years ago that my father and sister were driven out of Charleston, South Carolina, by an infuriated mob of slaveholders because, in obedience to a commission issued by the authority of the state of Massachusetts, he had gone thither to test, in the courts of the United States, the validity of those laws under which they imprison our citizens for no crime but the color of their skins; and none of you, I think, will accuse *me* of having any *great* sympathy for slaveholders. It is gratifying to see such a feeling of indignation manifested against any individual whose acts have rendered him odious in your eyes—but yet I trust none of you have come here to do him any personal violence. Even in Charleston, low and degraded as the majority of citizens are, some persons were found to maintain the majesty of the law; and to their interference, my father and sister owed the preservation of their lives. Let it not be said of us, citizens of Worcester, that we have less respect for law and order than was manifested by them. Let us all remember that the cause we all have so much at heart cannot but suffer if we engage in acts of violence against the obnoxious and odious individual who, whatever may have been his past course, assures me that he came here with no intention of molesting a slave. Believing that your sentiments upon this subject are in unison with mine, I have ventured to assure Mr. Butman, in your behalf, that he may depart from the city unmolested and in peace; and I have offered to accompany him to the depot, so that he may leave by the earliest train.

The earnestness of Mr. Hoar, and the high regard in which every one held him, kept the men quiet while he spoke, but at the sight of Butman, they burst forth again, and made a rush for him as Senator Hoar led him out. Violence and mob rule seemed sure. Butman, white with terror, could hardly move a step, so roughly did the crowd press in upon him. Before any one realized what was happening, Stephen Foster had stepped up and taken Butman's other arm. Then Martin Stowell and Thomas Wentworth Higginson and some other equally influential men surrounded him in a body guard. If the mob injured their victim, they would have to assault also men whom they respected and loved. Moreover, the "protection given by these friends of liberty to the *person* of this cringing coward, whose supposed business they loathed" was an inspiring act.

But the progress to the station was slow. Six hundred men started from the Court House in the wake of Butman and his noble defenders. Some shied stones or other missiles at him, and twice there was a complete halt while the Worcester police helped free the fugitive from the clutches of some determined negro.

To make matters worse, the train had gone. The crowd at the station numbered at least a thousand, and the situation was becoming more difficult every minute. Stephen Foster ventured out on the platform, and assured the crowd that Butman had promised never to come to Worcester again, and urged them to let him go in peace. But the mob made no move to disperse. "At length a hack was procured by order of the Marshal, and into it the poor, abject, debased, degraded, and trembling white fugitive was hustled, and the Reverend Mr. Hig-

# NATIONAL ATHENÆUM!

## BRINLEY HALL.

The Inhabitants of WORCESTER and its vicinity, are respectfully informed that a

Select Company of Artists from Boston,

Have leased the above Hall for a short period, for the purpose of producing a series of sterling Dramas by the most approved authors, commencing

**Wednesday Eve'g next, May 26** 1847.

The public may rest assured that pieces will be produced in a superior manner, with all necessary appointments, worthy the patronage of an enlightened community.

DIRECTOR,

TREASURER,

Mr SPEAR,

Mr WRIGHT,

The SCENERY by Mr ROBERT JONES.

Subject of the Act Drop, "THE TOWER OF LONDON," painted for the Mechanics' Fair and acknowledged to be one of the best efforts of this talented artist.

ORCHESTRA,

Messrs MEYERS, CLARK & PATTERSON

**Wednesday Evening, May 26,**

Will be performed James Sheridan Knowles' celebrated play, in 5 acts, of the

## BUNCEBACK

Master Walter,  
Sir Thomas Clifford,  
Lord Tinsel,  
Modus,  
Fathom,  
Wilford,  
Stephen,  
Williams,  
Julia,  
Helen,

Mr McFarland  
Mr Smith  
Mr Keach  
Mr Spear  
Mr Vincent  
Mr Dunn  
Mr Ring  
Mr Aiken  
Miss Gann  
Mrs Vincent

During the Evening the Orchestra will perform several Marches, Waltzes, and Popular Airs.

No performance will exceed 11 o'clock.

Doors open at 7 1-2,

Performance to commence at 8 o'clock

**ADMISSION 25 CENTS.**

To be had at the principal Book Stores during the day, and at the Hall during the Evening.

**CHECKS NOT TRANSFERABLE.**

NOTICE.—Persons are requested not to deliver any article for the Athenæum without an order signed by the Director or Treasurer.

In Rehearsal, Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer's beautiful play, called the

**LADY OF LYONS.**

*From the original in the collection of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

OLD HANDBILL

This announced the first theatrical performance given by professional actors in Worcester.



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

ginson took a seat by his side." The crowd jeered until they were out of sight, and so ended the "Butman Riot."

## LECTURE BY THACKERAY

*December 12, 1855*

William Makepeace Thackeray's visit to Worcester is thus described in the *National Ægis*, December 19, 1855.

The Course of lectures before the Lyceum commenced last Wednesday. Mr. Wm. Thackeray gave the introductory. He is the author of "The New-comers," which has been published in *Harper's Magazine*.

His subject was George III. Mr. Thackeray is a stout, healthy looking man with a red, good natured looking face, slightly round shouldered, and when reading his manuscript, looks as though he stooped a little, and didn't care if he didn't look well. He holds his sheets in his hands and reads from them in bad style, sometimes pronouncing a sentence so quickly that it is difficult to understand its meaning. He observes no rules for punctuating, so mixing up and running together sentences, that the periods are not discoverable. For instance, he was giving a picture of the family of George III, and speaking particularly of the Queen and Princess Amelia as they appeared when walking in the garden, when he spoke something in this way:

"The King and Queen were together, the Princess Amelia, of whom the King was very fond, when not being led by him ran a little ahead. In 1810 George III ceased to live."

There is no systematic arrangement of the discourse. It was as if he was in company with ladies and gentlemen, leading in conversation, because most familiar with the topics discussed, and answering questions of various persons, on characters and customs of the time—rambling from one point to another. . . .

Thackeray is popular just now. His entertainments are fashionable—in the very "tip-top" of fashion, and he gets an enormous price for reading his papers. His style is original, and that's why he is popular. No other public speaker reads as he does,—or ought to,—and it is something new. The world's people are after novelty. Thackeray brings a supply of the present wants. And he brings his wares to a paying market.

## THE OPENING OF PIPER'S THEATER

*February 9, 1857*

The story of the drama's struggle for acceptance as a welcome institution in Worcester life is as amazing now as it is amusing. That "public stage plays, interludes and other theatrical entertainments, not only occasion great and unnecessary expenses and discourage industry and frugality but likewise tend generally to increase immorality, impiety and a contempt of religion," was so firmly believed by the leading men of the town—as well as of every town in New England—that any effort to introduce public amusements of any kind met violent opposition. There was an Act passed in 1750, which provided that "if any person or persons shall be present as an actor in or a spectator



## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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of any stage play, etc., in any house, room, or place where a greater number of persons than twenty shall be assembled together, every such person shall forfeit and pay every time he, or they, shall be present as aforesaid five pounds." Such stringent curtailment of recreation is not surprising for that early time, since household tasks were then so numerous, constant industry so necessary for the very maintenance of life, and religious principles so severe. But it took sixty years for the prejudices thus established to be overcome, and the building of a theater to be a matter of public approval.

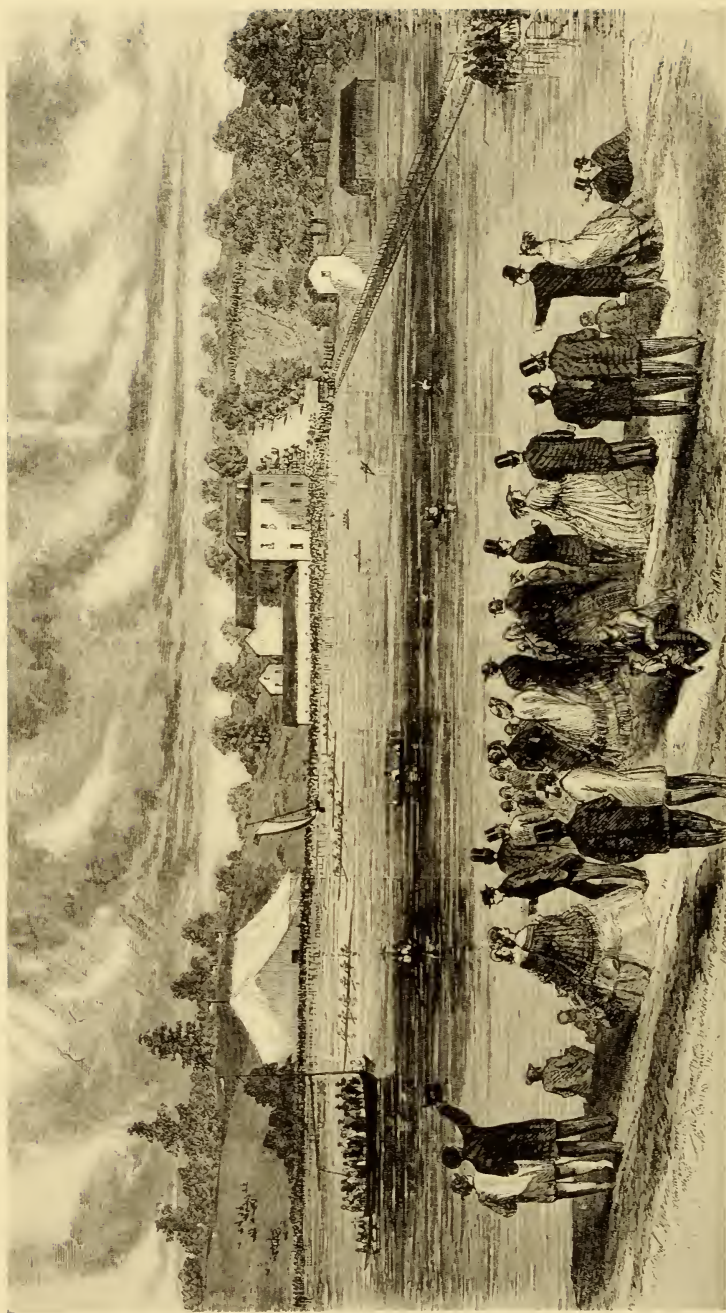
In 1787, a schoolmaster named Brown had his pupils act Addison's "Cato." The amateurs gave a successful performance, although no costumes were used. Ten years elapsed before the next company made its appearance. In 1797, Mr. Hogg, late from the Boston Theater, informed the ladies and gentlemen of Worcester (in the advertisement columns of the *Spy*) "that the hall over the schoolroom is fitted up for the purpose of representing some select and most admired of dramatic pieces, a musical entertainment—The Waterman, a dramatic romance in one act called The Oracle or Daphne and Amintor, the whole to conclude with a *pas de deux*. Doors open at 6½, performance begins at 7½. Front seats 3s. Back seats 2s. 8d." Whether the attendance was creditable will never be known. The *Spy* has no account of it, nor of any of the plays given that week the actors remained in town. "Like Master, like Man" and "The Shipwrecked Mariner, with singing by Mr. Hogg" were among the offerings.

After their departure, for many years the serious-minded townsmen had their way, although an occasional circus and now and then a moving diorama or a freak exhibited at a hotel drew the more lax members of the community. Barnum's first venture as a showman—Joice Heth, aged one hundred and sixty-one years, the nurse of George Washington—could be seen at the Railroad House for twenty-five cents, in 1825.

On May 16, 1832, the *Spy* contained this paragraph:

The Selectmen have licensed a company of strolling actors, calling themselves Circus Riders, to exhibit their fooleries here. We presume that in giving their consent, the Selectmen had no idea of encouraging vice or dissipation or of acting in opposition to the well-known wishes of a majority of their constituents. Who does not know that no one gets any good of attending such exhibitions? That by going, he encourages idleness, cruelty and vice. It is to be hoped that this is the last time we shall be troubled with such unwelcome visitors and that our Selectmen will in future be careful not to lend their aid in encouraging them to come among us.

A play called "The Reformed Drunkard," supposedly of highly moral purpose, was objected to in 1846, and in June, 1847, when a regular theatrical company called The National Athenæum came from Boston to play at Brinley Hall for a run of three weeks, a controversy began which lasted for the next ten years. There were always some people who were broad-minded enough to patronize the performances, and who really enjoyed them: the newspaper reports of the plays, by way of



*From a print*

# COLLEGE REGATTA ON LAKE QUINSIGAMOND IN 1861

Along the far shore, beginning at the left are: The contestants' tent, Monroe's Tavern, Doctor Green's boathouse, and another boathouse in which the shells were kept. The floating bridge is to be seen at the right.

*Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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defending them, kept emphasizing the decorous behavior of the audience, the high tone of the morals set forth in the plots, and, in general, assuring the readers of the innocence of the amusement, instead of praising the actors. But still some people could not with clear consciences countenance such pastimes.

From 1851 to 1854, a hall in Flagg's Block was the scene of many pretentious offerings by versatile actors, and under the auspices of such influential men as Dr. John Green, founder of the Public Library, its entertainments were well attended. Mrs. Beissenherz and Mrs. George Barnett were leading ladies whose repertoire included Shakespeare, as well as a long list of highly melodramatic rôles. A public hearing had to be held to determine whether Noah F. Gates of Lowell, who was the manager in 1853, could have his license renewed. Alfred Dwight Foster, Rev. Alonzo Hill and W. R. Hooper spoke against it, and it is probable that especially the younger generation of Worcester citizens applauded Dwight Foster, Dr. O. Martin and Dexter Parker, who urged that the license be granted. It was granted provided that no one under eighteen years of age should be admitted.

Denman Thompson, of "Old Homestead" fame, appeared early in the Worcester Dramatic Museum, as it was called, "playing anything and everything besides dancing hornpipes and fancy dances between the acts." "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was the last piece to run in the Flagg building. While the question of renewing the license was again raising a storm in the City Council, the hall was destroyed by fire on one of the coldest nights of the year. Scenery, costumes, properties—everything was lost. There were many who believed it was the work of an incendiary.

Piper's Theater was on Front Street opposite the City Hall. It was built by William Piper. Boyden and Ball were the architects. Its opening on February 9, 1857, marked the end of any strong opposition to the theater as a part of the city's recreation and education. It represented Worcester's entrance into an era of conscious social pleasure. The spirit of it had been in the City for many years—for the gatherings in Flagg's Hall had been brilliant and enthusiastic, and the Lyceum lectures drew crowds.

The play on the opening night was "Ingomar." An address of welcome written by Mr. A. M. Thaxter was recited by Miss Mary Hill (Mrs. Thaxter). In the cast were Wyzeman Marshall of Boston as Ingomar, Miss Hill as Parthenia, Messrs. Beck, Stanton and Taylor as the Three Citizens of Massalia, and Charles Wilkinson as Lykon. The last-named actor was already well known to many of the audience. He had attended school in Worcester and had given parlor entertainments in Brinley Hall. He also acted that evening W. W. Clapp's farce "My Husband's Mirror." Wyzeman Marshall was the manager of the company as well as a talented actor, and when the season closed he was tendered a complimentary benefit by prominent men. A. H. Bullock, Henry Chapin, Charles Devens, Rejoice Newton, J. D. Washburn, J. E. Estabrook and Adin Thayer are listed among his patrons.



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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## THE FIRST OF THE COLLEGE REGATTAS ON LAKE QUINSIGAMOND

*July 26, 1850*

A holiday spirit took possession of Worcester when the crews from three colleges and their exuberant retainers arrived for this regatta. Since 1842, boat racing had been a part of college athletics, but 1859 was the first year that Lake Quinsigamond had been the course for such a contest.

The Lincoln House was the headquarters of the men from Yale and Brown Universities, while the Harvard crews stayed at the Bay State House. "Our streets," said the *Spy*, "were filled with college students, not pale and attenuated with midnight studies and early prayers, but rosy-faced, muscular, nervous young men, who enjoy life."

The races were held late in the afternoon. The crews were to start from below the bridge, row to the north end of the lake, a mile and a half away, turn the stake boat and return. The choicest places for seeing—the bluffs on the west side of the lake, and the shore, on a line with the boat which marked the finish—were sought out early in the morning by the first of the thousands of people who kept crossing the bridge all day. Peddlers of banners, fruit, candies and drinks went hurrying along with the crowd, or, from carefully selected points of vantage, hawked their wares.

The weather, which had been doubtful, became clear, as the boat containing the judges, the newspaper reporters and referee left the Worcester shore and was rowed to the head of the course, at half-past four. Then cheers greeted the crews as they left their tents and took their places. There were four six-oared sculls—Harvard having entered two—and each was named. Numbering from the shore opposite the Worcester side, they had these positions:

1. Yale's boat—"The Yale"—the color of Spanish cedar. Its crew were clad in light blue pants, silk shirts and light blue scull-caps.
2. Brown's boat—"The Atalanta"—light straw-color. Uniforms: checked gray pants, salmon silk shirts, blue skull-caps.
3. Harvard—"The Harvard"—a pine-color boat whose rowers wore blue pants, white shirts and red handkerchiefs.
4. "The Avon" of Harvard—white with a green stripe, which set off distinctly the figures of the men in it. Clad in black pants, white shirts and handkerchiefs and green ribbons.

They all made a splendid start when the pistol sounded, but before the stake boat was turned, it was evident that the victory would go either to Harvard or to Yale. Not in spurts, but slowly, "The Harvard" worked ahead, and reached the finish in 19 minutes 18 seconds—only



*Handwritten: 1861*  
**WAR HAS BEGUN!!**

# **CIVIL WAR!**

**THE WORST OF ALL WARS.**

**OUR FLAG HAS BEEN FIRED UPON AND OUR FORTS CAPTURED.**



**OUR NATIONAL CAPITAL  
THREATENED WITH INVASION.**



The people of Massachusetts are insulted with the threat that they shall  
smell the powder and feel the steel of the Secessionists; that  
*the flag of Rebellion shall be hoisted over the Cradle of Liberty!*

# **PATRIOTS, TO ARMS! TO ARMS!**

**Enrol and Drill Your Men.**

**Be True to the Spirit and Blood of your Ancestors!**

**RESPOND WITH PROMPTNESS TO THE CALL OF YOUR COUNTRY.**

CHAR. HAMILTON, CALORIC PRINTER, PALLADIUM OFFICE, WORCESTER.

*From the original in the collection of the American Antiquarian Society*

**CIVIL WAR POSTER**

Issued in Worcester soon after the firing on Fort Sumter.

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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a little ahead of "The Yale." This time did not equal Harvard's record in the Beacon races, which had been 19 minutes 11 seconds.

Shouts of rejoicing and excitement echoed about the lake. For Harvard, it meant that this was one more year for it to boast that its navy had never been defeated. The philosophic reporter of the *Ægis* remarked in his story of the race, "Seconds are small things in themselves, but in this instance a couple of them gave a year's pride to a whole college."

The victors rowed to the grandstand, on the shore near the finish line, and received the blue and white silk pennant marked "College Regatta 1859." The captain of the boat made a graceful speech as he accepted it.

As the people started for the trains and for their carriages, which were waiting along the road and in the groves, it started to rain. The downpour scattered the crowd in all directions and turned the colorful procession crossing the bridge into a rush. The trains on the Boston and Worcester Railroad supplied very good service, and somehow every one was taken care of.

The next day was Yale's day. "The Yale" was at the stake boat twenty seconds ahead of "The Harvard." The other two boats did not enter the race, so the narrowing of the contest to these two rivals made the last half of the course much more exciting. Yale won by about two boat-lengths and the prize was one hundred dollars. The second day of the regatta was arranged in compliment to the college crews by the City of Worcester. Its citizens donated the prize, and arranged a four-oared race and one for single-oared sculls, in which some famous oarsmen appeared.

Chess matches between the colleges rivaled the boat racing in the college men's interest, while they were in Worcester. In the evenings, and in the afternoons when they first arrived, regular games between representatives of Brown, Harvard and Yale were played.

A Worcester boy named William C. Wilson, though only seventeen years of age, and a farmer who "came from pitching hay to try his wits against those of the college experts," played blindfolded, and won from Harvard.

With the exception of the years of the Civil War, these college regattas were held in Worcester until 1870.

## WELCOME TO THE TROOPS RETURNING FROM THE CIVIL WAR

*July 4, 1865*

Worcester's first quota of three hundred soldiers for the Union army was ready one week after the requisition was made. Fort Sumter was taken on April 12, 1861. On the 19th, the anniversary of the Battle of Lexington, Worcester men were marching in Washington. The public buildings and the stores on Main Street had brightly col-

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER



*From a photograph*

*Worcester Historical Society collection*

## WORCESTER GUARDS IN CAMP

George H. Ward was in command of these soldiers whose tents and uniforms were hardly as practical as the ones used in the World War.

ored banners waving in farewell and encouragement, but Worcester hearts were sad. Hurried weddings, solemn Sunday services with war always the text of the preacher, industrious and prayerful folding of bandages, packing of little comforts, anxious waiting, and frantic grief—Worcester people had their share of these during the four years of Civil War. So the Fourth of July in 1865 was a day of unsurpassed rejoicing by the whole city.

“It was decided that the celebration should combine two distinct parts—first, an ovation to the returned soldiers, and second, a grand procession exhibiting the industrial pursuits and resources of the city.” The Committee of Arrangements included Mayor Phineas Ball; Harrison Bliss, E. C. Cleveland, William E. Starr, George R. Peckham, Salisbury Hyde and William McIvor of the City Council; and James B. Blake, J. D. Daniels, Henry A. Marsh, Alzirus Brown, John S. Baldwin, Lucius W. Pond and George Sumner.

The parade of the soldiers formed on Park Street at half-past nine in the morning, and marched through Main Street, Highland, Harvard, Chestnut, Elm, West, Pleasant and Main Streets to Lincoln Square. A countermarch on Main Street brought the procession to Mechanics

# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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Hall, where the city's complimentary breakfast to the soldiers was served.

Lavish expense of money and labor had made the streets veritable ways of triumph. An enormous arch crossed Main Street at Harrington Square. "The Heart of the Commonwealth greets the Defenders of the Union," it read on one side, and on the other, "All Honor to our Gallant Army and Navy." The names of battlegrounds familiar to the returned soldiers were listed on it. There was a memorial arch draped with black opposite the Post-Office, and a rustic arch at School Street. The arch opposite Stephen Salisbury's house on Highland Street bore the mottoes "To be Free is to be Strong" and "Reap the Fields your Valor Won." On Harvard Street, Joseph Chase, Esq., had erected one with the sentiment "Your Valor and Your Devotion have saved the Flag—Thanks!"

Many other messages of welcome had been arranged on arches or pennants by various citizens and business houses. A few of the most prominent ones which greeted the heroes as they marched with flowers in their hands were:

Soldiers, you have Crushed Treason, Ended the Rebellion, and Saved the Country—Welcome!

---

Welcome the Returned—Victory!  
Remember the Fallen—Peace!

---

Grant, Sherman and Sheridan.  
Farragut, Porter and Dupont.

---

Sound the loud cannon, let every flag fly!  
Remember forever the Fourth of July!

---

The Peaceful Arts sustained by Patriot Arms defended.

---

America's Debt to her Citizens she can pay—that to her Soldiers, never.

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America lives though many of her Noble Sons have died to save her.

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The Union saved, Slavery destroyed by the Brave Boys in Blue.

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Honor to those who are not afraid to die for their Country.

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The Nation shall under God have a New Birth of Freedom.



# HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER



*From a photograph*

*Kindness of Benjamin Thomas Hill*

## MAIN STREET IN 1865

As it was decorated for the welcoming of the troops returning from the Civil War.

The arch erected by George Crompton, Esq., opposite his loom works on Green Street, was pronounced by many who saw it the neatest of any in the city. It was thirty feet high, thirty-two feet wide, and draped with evergreen, and arranged with mottoes, with a very handsome representation of the Goddess of Liberty over the top of the arch. The goddess was of the Classic days, with staff and cap and shield, with light drapery of blue with silver stars.

In the procession itself there were representations of "The Union" by thirty-six young ladies, each as a State; The Goddess of Liberty; "The Pen and the Sword"; and Peace through Victory.

Two long vehicles—the boat sleigh "Challenge" of the Worcester Horse Railroad, and a long omnibus—both appropriately decorated with flags, and evergreen, and banners, bore the disabled soldiers. The mottoes on the boats were "Any Sacrifice for the Republic is cheerfully made" and "Our Limbs are lost, but our Country is saved."

A faded flag which had floated above the head of Farragut on his flagship "Hartford" at Forts Jackson and St. Philip was borne by the naval heroes.

Men from every Worcester County regiment were in line, and there was impartial applause for each section as it went by.

Thousands of school-children cheered, and sang patriotic songs, and waved flags as the parade passed through Main Street.

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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There was great excitement "when, as the procession arrived at Mechanics Hall, a beautiful American flag was seen suspended over Main Street, several hundred feet in the air, gaily fluttering in the breeze, and brilliantly illuminated by the noonday sun. It was attached to the string of a kite, which some patriotic youth had flown, and was a beautiful and thrilling sight."

In the afternoon came another parade—the 'Trades' Representation. Nearly all important enterprises were represented, and the procession was more than two and a half miles long, occupying three-quarters of an hour in passing a given point. |'

The entire procession, besides the Fire Department, included one hundred and twenty-eight teams, drawn by three hundred and twenty-six horses, and twenty-six oxen. Notwithstanding the length of the procession, and its unwieldy character, there was no delay or confusion. It moved promptly on time, and no accident of moment occurred on the route. This grand success reflected great credit upon the committee, and especially upon the Chief Marshal, Hon. James B. Blake.

The Fenian Brotherhood, about three hundred strong, made their first appearance in uniform caps, bearing the United States and Irish flags.

The Young Men's Benevolent and Total Abstinence Society, an organization of boys, made its first appearance, numbering two or three hundred members. The German Turners, German Singing Society, Father Mathew Temperance Society, and American Hibernian Society,—the last headed by a person playing a Scotch bagpipe,—were all in full ranks, and several of them carried splendid silk banners.

The trade representatives were preceded by an emblem of industry—"two enormous straw beehives around which bees were hovering, and surrounded with flowers, all extremely lifelike and natural."

At night, the arches were illuminated, and the throngs of people walked about admiring them and watching displays of fireworks.

The Fourth of July in Worcester history had many times before marked the celebration of some other event besides its own anniversary, as these pages have shown. But for fervor and unanimous participation, there was no greater rejoicing there than on July 4, 1865.

### LYNDE BROOK DAM SWEEP AWAY

*March 3, 1876*

When 760,000,000 gallons of water are threatening to rush forth in a torrent at any minute, there cannot be much peace in a city only five miles away.

The *Daily Spy* of March 30th announced that great difficulty was being found in draining off the surplus water which spring rains had poured into the reservoir at Lynde or East Brook, in Leicester. It also pointed out that a leak had been discovered in the archway. The threatened danger caused great agitation in Worcester. Citizens made



From a print

Worcester Historical Society collection

## THE LYNDE BROOK DAM DISASTER

The path torn out by the water when it burst the dam's walls.

their way with hundreds of others to stand on the hillsides and watch the slow battle with the water. To stop a break which had already been worn between the upper gate house and the rollway, men were throwing in bags of stones and pine trees they cut down. The people whose homes were near the dam started moving their furniture to places of safety, and as the day passed, the engineers knew that only a miracle could keep the excess water from bursting the walls. The *Spy's* extra, depicting scenes at the aqueduct and the probable result if it gave away, created great apprehension on the streets of Worcester.

Just at six o'clock on the evening of March 31st the suspense which had lasted twenty-four hours was ended. "The sight as the spiling wall gave away," says the *Spy* reporter, "was terrifically grand. Those who witnessed it will never forget it, and never care to view a similar scene. The water rushed down the ravine in a solid mass twenty feet high, whirling and rushing at the same time, and the roar was terrible. First in the line of the onswEEPing flood was the stone waste gate house. When the flood struck this, it tottered. Then the keystone of the arch dropped out. A corner of the building next gave away, followed by the wooden roof, which was swept onward until drawn into a whirlpool, when it was crushed to hatchwood, and thrown into the air. The gate house was tipped over bodily, and not even a stone of it has since been seen.

## HISTORIC EVENTS OF WORCESTER

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“Down through a narrow ravine 100 feet wide and one mile long the flood swept on. The sides were gullied, fairly dug out clean, in an instant, for fifty feet, until the edge of the embankment was almost perpendicular. Through the pine woods on one side of the ravine, the waters tore. The largest trees were twisted around like straws, pulled up by the roots, and carried onward down the decline.”

After destroying the fine home of George Olney which stood in its path, when it reached the Leicester road, it surged on toward Cherry Valley. People of Janesville, Stoneville, Leesville, New Worcester and South Water waited that night for the arrival of the rushing flood, not knowing just when it would come or how it would leave their houses and mills. With mills, particularly, the water worked mischief as it went along. The brick building of A. J. Smith and Company's woolen mill it demolished as completely as it did the wooden one of A. E. Smith. The boiler of the Ashworth and Jones mill, one of the best in the country, was carried off, and it exploded loudly several times and threw a stream of water high in the air, as if in protest.

When the “water mountain” reached a railroad it ripped out ties and rails and twisted them, and the harm it did to the bed of the Boston and Albany Railroad was very costly.

The Crompton Carpet Mill at South Worcester suffered only a slight flooding of its basement, but the Wicks' Manufacturing Company, across the stream from it, had seven large looms destroyed.

At Quinsigamond, the water rose high enough to threaten the stone arch bridge, but about midnight it subsided there. At Millbury, the old road into Worcester was not so badly washed but that it could be repaired the next day.

Lynde Brook Reservoir, which since 1865 supplied Worcester with water, was left completely dry. In five hours its waters had wrought \$319,000 worth of damage. A new aqueduct was completed in May, 1877, while Clark Jillson was mayor.



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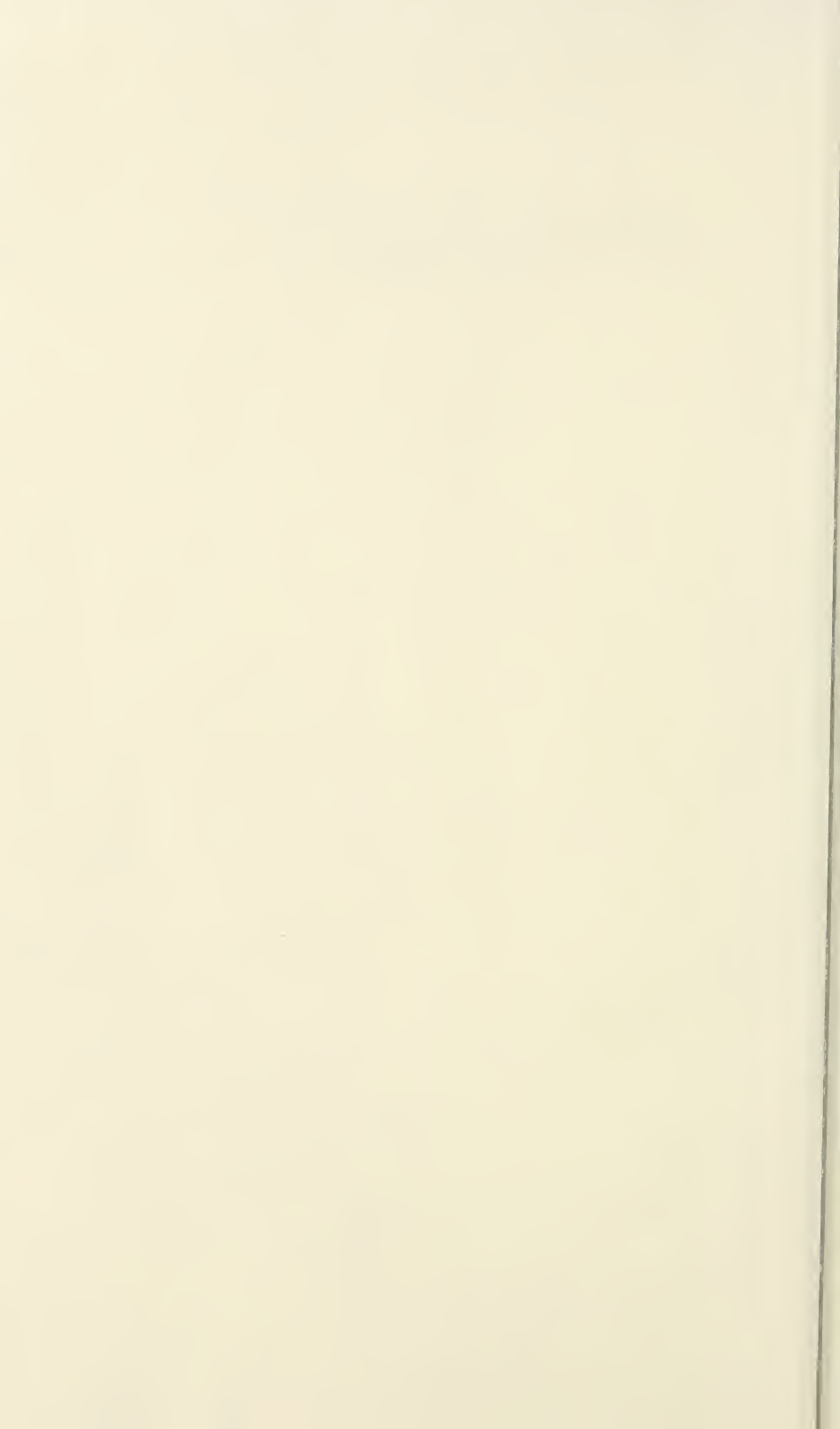
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